

## *The Huge Season*

This is the story of four men who were at an American college together in the 1920's, Peter Foley the scholar, Jesse Proctor, Lundgren and the tennis playing Lawrence, heir to the barbed wire millions, who dominated and magnetized the lives of the first three. By a strange story-telling device interweaving the past and the present, the author tells of what happened to these people at college, in Paris, in the war and in love; what their lives meant to them in the years between, and how thirty years later they were still held captive by their past.

*Wright Morris*

# THE HUGE SEASON



London: SECKER & WARBURG

*Copyright by Wright Morris*  
*Printed in England by*  
*The East Midland Allied Press*  
*Peterborough*  
*and first published by*  
*Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd*  
*7 John Street London, W.C.1.*

**FOR  
HENRY ALLEN MOE  
RAINMAKER  
TO MANY HUGE SEASONS**





Those who lay naked in the huge season arise all together and cry  
that this world is mad!

For us who were there, we forced on the frontiers exceptional accidents, and pushing ourselves in our actions to the end of our strength, our joy amongst you was a very great joy . . . .

—St. John Perse: *Anabasis*



## THE CAPTIVITY: I

They tell me that my father, a Latin teacher, would place his silver watch, with the Phi Beta key dangling, on the right-hand corner of the desk in his Vergil class. When he was not lecturing, the students would hear the loud tick. The watch had been given to him by his father when he became a Cum Laude Latin scholar, and the inscription *Incipit Vita Nova* had been engraved on the back. A very punctual man, my father wound the watch when he heard the first bell ring in the morning, then he would place it, with the fob dangling, on the corner of his desk. Time, for my father, seemed to be contained in the watch. It did not skip a beat, fly away, or merely vanish, as it does for me. So long as he remembered to wind the watch Time would not run out. There was no indication that he found his subject a dead or dying language, or the times, for a man of his temperament, out of joint. He died the winter of the flu epidemic during the First World War.

I never heard my father lecture, but I have his silver watch here in my pocket, still keeping very good time. It is his watch, but my own Phi Beta key now dangles from it. I have the habit of looking at the watch without seeing the time. I teach, among other things, my father's subject, but it seems to me the times *are* out of joint, and that the language is not merely dying, but dead. It was still alive—or I was more alive—when my father, for cultural reasons, spoke it at the table more than thirty years ago. The dining room was always dark, even in the morning, and the Latin my father passed to me with the toast seemed as good a language to start the day with as anything else. Our house was on Byron Street, in Chicago, just a five-minute walk, as my father timed it, from his room on the third floor of the Lakewood High School. That part of Chicago, even

today, might be in Terre Haute, Des Moines, or Ann Arbor, or any other town with a fairly large residential area. It is why I feel at home, as we say, in any town where the houses have lawns and front porches, and something of a stranger where the living has moved around to the back.

We had a brown frame house, more or less like the neighbours', with the gable at the front and the back, the front porch open, but the porch at the rear closed in with screens. A piece of sagging wire went around the small patch of grass at the front. In the spring my father would put in a little grass, then tie strips of rag, like ribbons, to the wire, so the neighbours' kids would not trip on it in the dark. A broad flight of steps led up to the porch, where my mother, between supper and the dishes, would sit in the swing behind the wire baskets of fern. She would sit there because her kitchen apron was still on. My father would sit on the fourth step from the bottom, sprinkling the grass. The best stand of grass was there near the steps, where the water dripped from the leaky nozzle, and the third step from the bottom had warped so badly it had worked loose. It was one of the things my father always intended to fix. My mother had warned him that some member of the family was sure to break his neck. But my father died in bed of the flu, and my mother, for reasons of her own, preferred to go up and down the rickety stairs at the back of the house. I lived in it long enough to go off to college, and some years later the house was sold. The loose step was still there when I walked past the house eight or nine years ago.

My room was at the front of the house, under the gable, where the ceiling sloped down over my bed and the window at the foot of the bed opened out on the roof of the porch. The street light came through that window, and in the spring and summer the sounds of the street. A block to the west, then a block north, the Ashland Avenue cars reached the end of their run, and when the trolley was switched there would be a white flash, like lightning, on the sky. Both summer and winter this white flash would light up

my room. Where the ceiling sloped down over my head I once wrote out the declensions of my Latin verbs, and on the warm summer nights I would lie there on my back, memorizing them. I would wait for the flash of the trolley wire to check on what I had learned. Later I began to pin up certain pictures—Bebe Daniels was there at one time, beside Sappho—and, for all I know, a picture of Charles Lindbergh may still be there. It showed him in the cockpit of the *Spirit of St. Louis*, about to take off. It was a picture you have probably seen, but I doubt if you ever saw, or heard of, Charles Lawrence, the tennis player. I took his picture down when we moved, and I still have it somewhere.

Lawrence was quite a tennis player at one time, and the picture I have, although it is faded, gives you some idea of his tennis form. His back is to the camera, and he is about to serve the ball. You can see the ball at the top left corner, you can even read the label stamped on it. All the other details in the picture tend to be a little blurred: the wire screen at the back, the row of white faces with deep eye shadows so that they look like pansies, and the racket itself a blurred current of air approaching the ball. It is not, by modern standards, a good photograph. They do that sort of thing much better these days. They don't play better tennis, however, and the one thing that comes out clear in the print, blurred though it is, is the way the player goes after the ball. You can see that he takes the game seriously. I do not mean that he takes it professionally. A stranger to the game might feel that this was not the picture of a game at all, or that the blurred figure was preparing to strike nothing more than a ball. That kind of seriousness—I almost said deadly seriousness—has gone out of it. On the other hand, the stranger might not notice it at all. It might strike him as not much more than a poor photograph. If you think that great champions are made by eating Wheaties, that great songs can be written on commission, you will be inclined to feel that I am reading something into this photograph. In that sense you will be

right, as I am reading into it most of my life.

My mother believed that true breeding, like crime, would sooner or later appear on the surface, but she was thinking of the Nielsons, the Vikings whose course she had charted for nine generations, across continents and oceans, to a grand anticlimax in me. Of my father's country breeding she did not speak. A self-made scholar, born in South Dakota long before true breeding or my mother got there, my father could give me little, she believed, beyond parent-hood. His Greek translations rather than his Irish background appealed to her. At Oberlin, happily, he met my mother, which assured me the breeding I might have lacked, and an eye on the future as well as the past. From Oberlin my father went to Colton in California, where he was known as something of a classics scholar, but my mother didn't think there was much of a future for the classics in the West. They came back to Chicago, and while they waited for an opening that would open into the future, the war came along, and near the end of the war, the flu.

I was not quite nine years old when my father died. As I had been when he lived, I was sent to bed early, where I studied the verbs I had written on the ceiling, with the understanding that one day I would take my father's place. Lying there on the bed, summer and winter, I relied on my ears more than my eyes, and put great store in all the neighbourhood noises. On summer afternoons I could hear the crowd roar over at Wrigley Field. Later I would read that Hack Wilson had hit a home run. In the winter I could hear the boom and the crack of the ice on the lake. Many years later, in France, where I should have been homesick, I felt more or less at home because the grass below my window was cut with a mower that had been made in South Bend. I knew the sound, even though it was cutting French grass.

Our house was like a tunnel in some respects, the daylight glowing at the front and back, but the blinds drawn at the dark windows on both sides. Our neighbours, in my

mother's opinion, were too neighbourly. In the summer, when these windows were open, we could smell what the Millers were cooking, and hear how well they liked it when they sat down to eat. After the meal the Miller boy would run the player rolls through the piano backwards, or the Miller girl, Arlene, would turn up the radio so she could hear Guy Lombardo while she sat out in front of the house with her date. He was, as I remember, almost a young man, with cuts on his face to indicate he was shaving, and a Scripps-Booth roadster with Northwestern pennants on the wind-shield. I saw only his face, for he never got out of the car. I remember the ah-oooga of his horn, and the glow, after it was dark, of the red and green gems in the nickel-plated dashboard light. Later he took her to dances when Wayne King was over at the Aragon. Arlene was nearsighted without her glasses and thought she was dancing under the stars—the boy didn't tell her that the clouds were on the ceiling rather than the sky. But that is not so unusual. He might not have noticed it himself.

I didn't have the time for girls, but I took in a movie on Saturday night. They were featuring some pretty good bands, at the time, on the stage. The band leader acted as a sort of master of ceremonies. I usually went early, if the show was in the Loop; it gave me time to manoeuvre from a seat at the back to one nearer the front. During the intermission the organ played, rising out of the pit like a car for a grease job, and we all sang the songs the projector flashed on the screen. There often was a glow-worm hopping from word to word. I didn't sing, not having much of a voice, but after the show I would walk along the river, where the Wrigley Tower was reflected in the water, and hum to myself the tunes I particularly liked. "If I Could Be with You One Hour Tonight" was one of my favourites. I first heard "Yes Sir, That's My Baby" at the State, where they had a fiddle player no bigger than his bass fiddle, and he could hardly be seen until he started thumping it.

My mother was usually out on the porch when I got



home. We had a radio of our own, but the dry-cell batteries were usually dead, so my mother would listen to whatever was on the Miller set. The Millers usually watered their lawn in the evening, when the water pressure was up, and Mr. Miller liked to water the lower limbs of the trees. Long after he had stopped, the leaves dripped water on the walk. The night would be quiet, with the groan gone from the hydrant, except when the motorman, over on Ashland, walked through his car, turning over the seats for the trip back. We could hear the Miller dog skid on the kitchen linoleum. Mr. Miller usually commented that now he had sprinkled it would probably rain, and Mrs. Miller would ask him to bring in the chair cushions from the porch. When it was finally quiet my mother would offer me a penny for my thoughts.

At the end of the war, to make a little money, my mother decided to take in a lodger, a Mrs. Josephare who taught History of Art, Spanish, and French. We spoke nothing but Spanish and French at our meals. One summer Mrs. Josephare went to Seville, but as she was going just for the summer she left her books and box of wide-brimmed hats in my father's room. She never came back, and we never heard from her. My mother kept the box of hats in the attic; Mrs. Josephare, who was very frugal, had often complained, in both Spanish and French, about the things Americans threw away.

I was brought up with the understanding that I would go to Oberlin, like my parents, and I had my father's Oberlin pennants on the walls of my room. I spent a weekend on the campus to pick up impressions, and I was impressed. But my mother, in order to avoid putting all my educational eggs in one basket, also applied for a scholarship in California, where my father had taught. Thanks to his reputation, I received a four-year scholarship. That was two years better than the Oberlin offer, and my mother reasoned that the thing for me to do was start at Colton and finish at Oberlin. That way my education would be accounted for. The turning point in my life, if it had one,

lay in the decision to go to Colton first, for it was there I met Charles Lawrence, the tennis player. He was there because one member of his family had endowed the school. The endowment would help fill certain unusual gaps in his scholarship. We were both freshmen, and we shared a suite of rooms with two other freshmen, Jesse Proctor and Ed Lundgren, so that Lawrence had his captive public right from the start. I remember thinking, at the time, that we were like the iron filings in the field of a magnet that Lundgren liked to play with at his desk. But that was not it. Or rather, it was more than that. All that does is give a name to the magnet—it doesn't explain the lines of force, or why it was that Lawrence, who was the magnet, became a captive himself. So there we were, the four of us, in a strange captivity.

## PETER FOLEY: I

Early morning, the 5th of May, 1952.

The man in the bed, a professor named Foley, lay listening to the mournful cawing of the crows. They cruised directly overhead, or hovered like vultures in the tulip trees. Cawing at the house, the cat in the house, and the man in the bed. Blackbirds hammered at the seedpods in the gutters, starlings strutted in the grass beneath the window, and on the chicken wire spread across the top of the chimney a robin built her nest. Now and then a rain of soot or a sprinkling of twigs, pipe cleaners, and string dropped down the chimney, spattering the yellow pages of a manuscript lying in the fireplace. Thrown there to be burned by the author himself, the man in the bed.

The manuscript was entitled "The Strange Captivity." The author had worked at the book, off and on, for fifteen years. He knew everything about it, that is, but how to finish it. Now he knew that, but the knowledge had come too late. You couldn't call a man a captive who had lost all interest in his escape.

The morning of the day before, the 4th of May, the professor had got up to let out his cat and found the Sunday paper lying on the porch. The name of Mrs. Hermann Schurz, his landlady, was scrawled across the top left corner. Foley picked the paper up, glanced at the headlines. They were not happy. He returned the paper to the porch. Then he stooped over, propped on his knees, to examine a head that looked familiar—the back of the head, for that was all that showed in the photograph. This man sat at a table, facing the microphones, and the questioner faced him and the cameras. Beneath the picture the caption read:

UNMASKS VOICE OF AMERICA

"Well, I'll be goddamned!" Foley said aloud, as if unmasked himself. He knew the head of this man, even without the face. He knew the unmasked voice as well as he knew his own. Better, perhaps. Eyes closed, he heard this voice say, "There's a bull in this story, Foley. But he's a nice bull. He don't shit in the bullring."

There was always a bull in one of Proctor's stories, and this one, Foley felt, would be no exception. He grinned. With good-humoured admiration he wagged his head. Then he stooped over, smiling, to read the article.

The last-named witness, J. Lasky Proctor, created a stir at the proceedings with the frankness with which he collaborated with the senators. Asked if he had once been a member of the Party he replied, Well, in a sense—

What did he mean, "in a sense"?

Back at that time, he replied, he had been a very good American. A good American had to believe in something good. The Party had been it. It had been something in which a man could believe.

Did he mean to say he was no longer a good American?

If he was, he answered, he wouldn't be here.

In Russia, perhaps?

No, just in jail, he had replied.

And everybody had laughed. Foley also laughed, thinking to himself how much it sounded like Proctor, and how little, in more than twenty years, he seemed to have changed. It was twelve years since Foley had spoken to him; in the city—in New York, that is—bending over one of the toothbrush bowls in the lavatory of the Y.M.C.A.'s Sloane House, the grape-coloured bruise still showing on the foot where he had shot himself.

"I'll be goddamned!" Foley repeated and, still smiling, entered the house. He walked to where the percolator rocked on the stove, poured himself a cup of coffee but did not drink it. Unsmiling, he stood at the window, smoking

cigarettes. The morning breeze was strong with the scent of the rotting ginko pods. He faced it, he hardly remarked it, for the mist was rising from the pond, revealing what Mrs. Hermann Schurz described as a sight for sore eyes. A small flock, a covey of water birds, unidentified. Ducks of some kind, looking like freshly painted decoys. A sight that Mrs. Schurz loved, but she never ceased fearing for their lives. They were innocent ducks, like Peter Foley, J. Lasky Proctor, and other birds of that type. Sitting ducks, seemingly unaware of the facts of life. The patriotic marksmen of the penny arcade would soon pop them off. And that book, that thing Foley was writing, what was it but the "Sitting Duck Hunter's Manual"—a guide to the look, the diet, and the habitat of all sitting ducks? Dead ducks as of Sunday, the 4th of May, 1952.

Foley had walked down the hall to his study, scooped the pile of yellow sheets from the canned-milk carton, crossed the room to the fireplace, and thrown them into the grate. He had stooped to scratch a match on the hearth, but in the quiet, his head in the fireplace, he could hear the birds nesting at the top of the chimney. The match had burned down, and he had gone back to bed.

Everything in Foley's life dated from something—his father's watch, his mother's death, the characters and events of his first two years in college—but his real life dated from J. Lasky Proctor, and they both dated from Lawrence. Charles Gans Lawrence, heir to the barbed-wire empire, once well known for his tennis game without ground strokes, his bullfighting without sword strokes, and now remembered, if at all, for his early death in the afternoon. Known to the world as Lawrence; to Proctor, as the man in whom the sun rose and set. They had all risen with it, perhaps, but they dated, like fashions, from the moment it set. The 5th of May, 1929. Other suns had set that particular year, few of them in a blaze of glory, but with the passing of Lawrence a constellation had blacked out. Gone. One seldom, if ever, heard from such bright suns as Proctor

and Lou Baker, such satellites as Lundgren, Livingston, and Peter Foley himself. Snuffed out, leaving no trace, casting no light, emitting no radiation, no blaze of worlds in collision, but still circling in their orbits, in their appointed places, after twenty-three years.

On the 3rd of May—the date was certain in his mind as he had kept the stubs of two lottery tickets—on the 3rd he had spent his first night in Paris, kissed his first girl, and all but had his tongue bitten out of his mouth. Near the Etoile. In the shelter of a bus stop on the avenue Hoche. Girl known as Montana—Montana Lou Baker—and the morning of the 5th she woke him up to tell him that Charles Lawrence, the man in whom the sun rose, had shot himself.

That had been the end—but not officially. Officially, the survivors had gone on to die off piecemeal, as playboys or professors, or reappear as fossils, taken alive, on the nationwide patriotic TV programmes featuring the good, as well as the bad, Americans. The good brought forward, like a painless extraction, to smile at the world through all-American bridgework and speak with the filtered, uncontaminated voice of America.

That had made it official. That made it clear the jig was up. What had taken more than twenty years to die was now dead. The Lone Eagles were now a covey of Sitting Ducks. Dead, or good as dead, like the striking resemblance that Peter Nielson Foley once bore to Charles A. Lindbergh, another fossil from the great Age of Flight. The lemming-like un-American drive of young Americans to be somewhere else.

"Foley," Proctor had once said, "you self-effacing bastard, who the hell are you?"

Well, who the hell was he?

From the mirror that he faced, twenty-five years later, there came no reply. The blue eyes were now grey, the cleft chin was now double, the sandy hair had receded, the nose and ears protruded, but the self, that fossil-haunted self, was still effaced. Name being withheld until kith and kin

had been notified. Remains bore close resemblance to Nordic (maternal) side of the family, strongly given to notion that the Vikings found, then lost, America. Bachelor, professor of languages of no practical value, well known on quiet calcified campus for lifelike impersonations of Buster Keaton and a record of Hoagy Carmichael singing "Hong Kong Blues."

"A penny," his mother used to say, "a penny for your thoughts."

God knows why. He really never had thoughts. But that was how his mother had faced the problem of silence, and when Lou Baker had been snuggled in his lap, before she had bitten him, such a silence had to be faced.

So he had said to Montana Lou Baker, "A penny for your thoughts."

A mistake. One of the turning points in his life. For Montana Lou Baker, Bryn Mawr '27, had thoughts—but not her own.

"Give me the penny," she had said, and he had fished out a small French coin. She grabbed it, raised her head, and intoned, "There's more crap talked about this town than any other goddam place in the world."

"Is that *your* thought?" he asked knowing that it wasn't.

"It's his," she said, "but I agree with it."

"'Crap' doesn't sound much like him," he said.

"He didn't say crap," she said, "he said bullshit," and when the word came out, although he had been prepared, he recoiled.

"Didums nasty word hurtums?" Lou Baker said.

"I guess I don't like to hear a woman swear," he replied.

"You know the three ages of man?" she asked, and he neither did, nor did he want to, but she sat up straight, her fingers spread, to count them off. "There's the age of stone, when you throw rocks at each other; then there's the age of steel, when you throw that at each other; then there's the age of bullshit, when you throw—" and he clamped his hand over her mouth. He held it there till she squirmed, then he removed it, and she said, "My mother used to

wash my mouth out with Fels-Naptha. She made me bite it. You want to wash my mouth out?" and then she turned and stuck her red tongue right in his face. He almost got it, but she was too quick for him. She slipped off his lap, where she had been curled up in the ankle-length camel's hair coat she was wearing, and ran down the street to the *pension* where she lived. But her coat was heavy, and he soon caught up with her. He grabbed the belt across the back, swung her around, took a grip on her short hair as they did in the movies, and with her head tipped back he kissed her on the mouth. She returned it—then clamped down on his tongue. The pain was so bad his eyes filled with tears, and he covered his mouth. She ran down the street, laughing and hooting, the flat-soled huaraches slapping on the pavement, and before he could catch her she had got the door open, then closed again. From an upper floor window she pelted him with pennies, as if he were an organ grinder.

He had walked three or four miles, through the Paris night. Above the trees along the Champs Elysées the morning sky was reflected in the curtained windows, and the grey stone buildings had a bluish cast, as if dipped in the sky. When a taxi driver hailed him he would signal that he wanted to walk. He was ashamed to try to speak any French with his swollen tongue. From the corner of the Tuileries, looking back, he watched the sun rise on the Eiffel Tower, come down the tower, that is, like a lift making all the stops.

Foley's life—such life as he possessed—seemed to have begun with one Jesse Proctor and to have ended when *that* Proctor had given up. The Laureate of the Age of Bullshit, as Proctor had prophesied himself, had survived the stone and steel, but the manure had been too much for him. The single shot that killed Lawrence had crippled all of them. That shot had been fired on a warm spring morning, like the one Foley could see from his bathroom window, a mist over the pond as there had been over the Seine. When Foley had crossed the Pont des Arts a bum of some sort



had been seated right beneath it, rubbing a thick, soapy lather into the curls of a high-bred dog. The dog's fine collar and leash, with a clean towel for drying, lay at his side. Twenty-four hours later Lawrence was dead, and almost twenty-three years later, to the day, one J. Lasky Proctor was burning at the stake. One manuscript, ready for burning, lay in the grate.

On his lidded eyes Foley rested a forefinger, a thumb. Like a bouncing ball, or the glow-worm hopping from word to word, he saw the legendary headlines, exploding like fireworks:

LINDBERGH LANDS IN PARIS  
 EDERLE SWIMS CHANNEL  
 LOEB & LEOPOLD CONVICTED  
 RUTH MAKES IT SIXTY

And larger still, like a backdrop against which the fireworks were displayed, the mural-size photograph of a tennis player serving the ball. This photograph was printed on the cover of a book, with the player's signature at the bottom, and 'across the top the Spanish word

## QUERENCIA

*Querencia?* That part of the ring, the bullring, where the bull felt at home. The book was a novel about a tennis player who, when injured, had made himself a great bull-fighter. The author's name appeared on neither the cover nor the title page. It was *in* the book, rather than on it, turning up in the dedication, which read:

*For*  
 JESSE PROCTOR  
*Without whom this book*  
*would not have been*  
*written*

A hoax, the neatest trick of the decade; published without its concluding chapter, the author's name unmentioned except on the dedication page. The morning it was published, May 5th, Peter Foley was awakened by Montana Lou Baker, who told him that Charles Lawrence, the subject of the book, had shot himself

Only one man knew whether Lawrence had ever set eyes on the book. Richard Livingston the III, the practical joker, the man who had published the book in ten copies, knew that, of course, but nobody knew Richard Livingston. Not that well. Not after Lawrence had shot himself. But whether Lawrence had seen it or not he was dead; Jesse Proctor, the novelist, had been blighted; and Peter Foley, the witness, still had an unfinished book on his hands. Not to mention Lou Baker, the haunted siren, with a blighted masterpiece of her own that filled to overflowing two Campbell-soup cartons. It was Foley who had kept her at work on it. Knowing all the time it would never be finished—no more than his own. Unfinished, these books gave purpose and direction to their lives. There was always a page, a scene, or a chapter to be modified. New material, or new light on old material, was always turning up. Now there was more of it. A chapter on J. Lasky Proctor, ex-novelist, salvage expert, and importer of Jews.

Montana Lou Baker had been a little haggard, a bony, legend-haunted Garbo, the last time Foley had seen her in New York. They had gone over to Chumley's, where the walls were lined with the jackets of books other people had written, a few people had read, and everybody had forgotten—except Lou Baker. She knew the authors. She had read and remembered the books. She lived a life as bygone, and as dated, as the characters. In the Chumley museum of jackets and blurbs she was at home. La Grande Baker, in her turtleneck sweater, a few stringy wisps of hair stuck to her forehead, forever picking the crumbs of badly rolled cigarettes from her lips.

"Oh, Christ, Foley," she had said, and after a while he had put in, "A penny for your thoughts." He would. He

had blurred it right out.

And Lou Baker, naturally, had said, "There's the age of stone, when you throw rocks at each other; then the age of steel, when you throw that at each other; and then—"

Then came the age they were living in now. The age of—the blighted Laureate. Jesse Proctor become J. Lasky, the suspect Voice of America. In twenty-three years Foley had spoken to him just once.

Year of the Fair—the World's Fair out in Flushing. Foley had gone into town, taken a room at Sloane House for the night. Slept late, and had the barracks-size bathroom almost to himself. He stropped his razor, lathered his face, then noticed—reflected in the mirror—the legs of the man at the toothbrush bowl at his back. Had a towel around his waist, head bent over the bowl, and very fine legs. Foley knew them, both legs and feet, in particular the foot with the bruise on it, about the size and colour of a smoky Concord grape. That was where Jesse L. Proctor had shot himself. Shot himself with a Colt .38 or whatever, while crossing the Mojave in the seat of Lawrence's sports coupe. It had put him on crutches for at least eight months. Up until that moment he had been a quarter-miler, and not much else. But after shooting himself it had been necessary for him to take stock, as the saying goes, and while his foot had healed he had begun to write stuff that was pretty good. He had never run again. From that point on he had done nothing but write.

So Foley turned, his face lathered, and said—no, he didn't say it, it was not necessary, for Proctor turned from the toothbrush bowl and said, "How are you, old man?"

Just the same? Almost, but not quite. The blue-edged barbed-wire scar was still like a bone in Proctor's face. And the face was more—well, it was more Jewish, whatever that was. Head thrust forward, cocked a bit to the right. Foley finished shaving, and Proctor led him back to the room he shared with two other fellows, but they were gone all day, so it was like an office, he said, all to himself. There he showed Foley letters, at least five of them, on the letter-

heads of important business houses, giving him large orders for a new, patented World's Fair cane. It was not at all new, and not yet patented, but it was designed to wholesale for three cents, and was stained and grooved to resemble a piece of rustic wood. With a banner and a tin-plate tip on the point, it would cost five. The cane would retail at the Fair for fifteen or a quarter, and in the letters on hand Proctor said he had requests for two hundred fifty to around three hundred twenty thousand canes. His cut, per cane, would run about one-half cent, but if he could place orders for two hundred thousand with a firm he knew in South Carolina the cost would be reduced and his profit would run a good full cent. When you figured in the hundred thousands, that added up.

Then Foley took him to Childs for breakfast, since Proctor was a little short of cash at the moment, although his credit, not to mention his prospects, was extremely good.

"I'll give you a blast, old man!" he said, rushing off to a sales appointment, and Foley noticed that he still had his limp.

Hearing the cries of the birds, hearing them coming nearer, Foley closed the slats of the venetian blinds, stood with his back to the window as the cat, with his escort, passed. Routine manœuvre. No crisis, as yet. Peace did not reign, but it was being observed in the northeast corner of God's half acre. Mrs. Hermann Schurz, in bed over Foley's head, would have her ear to it.

He left the bathroom, took a seat on the bed, put on his socks. He put a shoe on, then slipped it off, thinking now was the time for his narrow-cuff flannels. French seat, English flannel, dating from the spring that Ivar Kreuger, the match king, shot himself in Paris, and Bruno Richard Hauptmann, paroled ex-convict, kidnapped Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr. No one would ever believe he wore a pair of pants that old. Or that his gabardine jacket, trimmed with chamois, dated from the contract negotiations,

successfully concluded, for a prospective Foley book. Book now lying in grate of fireplace, jacket now hanging on imported hanger. Would have looked good on Lawrence, man from whom Foley took his cues. Lawrence had been the model, but it had taken Foley, on what was described as his salary, all of twenty years to assemble the parts. And in those twenty years the world had gone on to other things. Leaving Foley with a style, an air of distinction, that he otherwise might not have had. He seemed to represent the finer things of a better day. In the twenties the rich spent their money on feathers and established standards that were hard to follow, but in the forties the rich made the old cars do and wore the old clothes. Foley was not rich, but he had something of the patina. In the lobby of a building on Fifty-seventh Street, on his way to somebody's water-colour show, he had been stopped by a woman, a woman of breeding, with the well-preserved sheen of good saddle leather, and she had wanted to know, she simply had to know, where he had got his shoes. The shoes on Foley's feet that day were more than twelve years old. They might well have been the last pair of such shoes in the world. Foley couldn't tell her that, or that he had bought the shoes back when she might have been in college, but he could tell her that he had bought them in Vienna, he had forgotten just where. He didn't tell her this was back before Herr Dollfuss was Chancellor. The style had come back, in the last few years, but not the men who patented it. In such shoes there were feet, but not those of Proctor, and in such jackets there were arms, but not those of Lawrence. With the exception of Foley. He still wore the same shoes, the same pants, the same coat. But he was not, of course, the same man himself. Not after twenty-two years, three hundred and sixty-four days. The night Montana Lou Baker had bit him a waiter at the Café des Deux Magots had congratulated her on being with such a handsome young man. Foley made him think of Le Grand Charles Lindbergh, he had said. Lou Baker had smiled. She had resembled Le Grande Garbo that night herself.

A dull thud, characteristic and familiar, communicated to Foley through the boards in the floor, announced that the cat had come in the pantry window. In with a bird, that is. If he had no bird he was willing to use the door. With bird, however, he used the pantry window, dropping from the high shelf with a thud, then depositing the bird either in, or on, the sack of Bermuda onions in the vegetable bin. If *in*, it might not be discovered for some time.

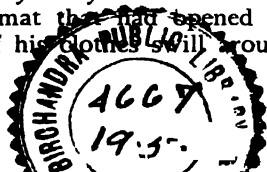
That made it three birds in five days, and Foley sat quiet, his eyes lidded, listening for the telltale scrunch of the onion bag. It came. It seemed to come with the draught from the fireplace. Foley opened one eye—closed it when he saw the pages of the manuscript. Relief. Almost sickening sense of relief. What would he do, in God's name what *would* he do, without his own captivity? As if it mattered if these captive ducks were dead. *His* ducks. Dead or alive, what mattered was that they were *his*. Foley's lifelike decoys. He would make them look so real nobody would know it—not even the ducks.

He crossed the room to take the sheets from the grate, but as he kneeled on the hearth something splattered on the top sheet. Bird dung. Asterisk indicating the chapter left out. "Always let it dry, old man," Proctor had said. "then chip it off."

He left it there to dry, finished dressing, checked his pockets for money, keys, and Lou Baker's phone numbers, leaped the gap in the hallway the rug did not cover, and let the door slam behind him, rattling the bottles with the note that said "No milk until tomorrow," and under a cloud of cat-yawping birds he began to run. Across God's half acre, around the edge of the pond to where the two strange birds, unidentified, were napping, but suddenly arose, water dripping from their feet, and flapped away. There he turned and looked back, glanced rather, for in the window directly over his study he could see the figure, massive and yet suspended, of Mrs. Schurz in a cloud of grey flannel, made by herself when she learned that ladies' nightwear, in her size, came only in pink.

He walked on, across the empty road as strange as the vacant morning aisles of Macy's, then cut around the supermarket, the entranceway full of bucking broncos, jet-propelled rockets, and cans of Miracle-Gro plant food, across the acre or more of blacktop staked out with posts, and diagrammed for parking, then up the flight of steps to the local platform and down the tracks to the east. As he went along the platform he passed an old man stretched out on a bench. A hat was tipped on his face, and his head rested on an overcoat tied up with a rope. A man of fifty-five, maybe sixty, an old-style tramp rather than a bum. Foley had seen him around the neighbourhood for five or six years. The old man often used the gents' facilities in the college dormitories. He attended the spring track meets, the home ballgames, lolled at his ease on the slopes around the pond, and was sometimes observed listening to the long Field Day speeches with a critical air. Foley had seen him as far as Paoli down the line. Always walking. He never hailed anybody for a ride. In the summer he was often seated on the big sandboxes of the Highway Department, swinging his feet like a kid and whistling softly as he watched the Main Line traffic flow by. He recognized Foley, for they exchanged greetings from time to time. The old man puzzled Foley because he hardly seemed aware that he was a bum. He might have passed as any local character, somewhat seedy, who pushed a mop in the diners or swept out the drugstores, if he had just given up carrying his winter coat tied up in a rope. That troubled Foley. The man seemed to have no pride. Otherwise he seemed to have what he needed—enough money for the food he ate out of paper bags, and paper cartons of milk that, when empty, he carefully deposited in the bins for trash. He did not smoke, was not known to drink, and chewed on nothing more offensive than the row of toothpicks he kept in the band of his hat.

One day Foley saw him in the gay deck chair of the new laundromat that had opened near the college, watching most of his clothes swirl around behind the glass of the



machine he faced. He had taken off his shirt, socks, and underwear, but not his pants and coat. He sat at his ease, a toothpick in his mouth, watching the clever, almost-human machine wash, rinse, and spin-dry his clothes. A ladies' wrestling match on a TV screen couldn't have absorbed him more. It was clear that he was pleased, but not overly impressed. He seemed to be, like his rope-tied bundle, nearly self-contained. Fussing all round him were a dozen rattled women, their eyes scanning some page, their fingers plucking at their hair, but even the pitiless stare of their spoiled children failed to penetrate him. For one spring, and all of one summer, Foley had hated the old man's guts, but now he walked in an arc, at the edge of the gravel, to keep from troubling his sleep. The sweat-stained felt hat with the toothpicks in the band remained flat on his face.

Looking south, beyond the road and the market, Foley could see the green, park-like gap of the campus and the tops of the drooping willows that surrounded the pond. An island. Not a piece of the main. The world passed it by like the stream of traffic on the road. One morning, from where he now stood, he had watched the blue heron that summered on the pond appear above the trees, the great wings flapping, water dripping from the feet like wet and trailing kite tails, and cruise over his head like some unnamed bird from the lost world behind the trees. A symbol of the college. A symbol of Foley himself. But the heron could fly, Foley could not, and the heron had other, wilder rendezvous, where the world along the road was as passing strange as a crazed bat's dream.

The tramp sleeping in the station, the heron on the pond, and Foley teaching Pindar to the Quaker freshmen were three examples of the prehistoric present, the persistence of the past. But the heron and the tramp had the better of it. The past that persisted in them had less compromise. Compared with the heron and the apple-cheeked tramp, Peter Foley was as ancient as the coelacanth, that steel-blue fish, long reputed dead, that had somehow refused to



give up, and shared with J. Lasky Proctor the news spotlight and the Committee nets.

Foley stepped back from the edge of the platform as the local pulled in. He started up the steps, backed down, as a passenger, the image of his father, and a Latin teacher at a boys' school near the campus, was getting off.

"Morning, Peter," he said, raised his gobbler's neck from the raddled rim of his collar, and passed, with a glance, judgment on Peter Foley, playing hookey from his academic duties.

"Morning, Allen," Foley muttered, let the old man get off, then walked through the empty train to the smoker. He dropped down in a seat where a morning paper had been left. A New York paper, with a two-column photo on the front page. The Senator from Wisconsin, his back to the camera, was wagging his finger at a man with a saintly, that is, almost silly, smile on his face. A bone-white scar showed in the dark beard along his chin. His hair was clipped like that of a monk, and though he faced the inquisitor his gaze was like that of the marble heads in Foley's Latin books. The stone eyes open wide, polished and smoothed, but not drilled for the pupils, so that the vacant, dreamy gaze was turned inward rather than out. Very much like the gaze of a tennis player well known in the twenties, and a flyer whose picture Foley had pinned to the ceiling of his room. But this was J. Lasky Proctor, unmasked Voice of America. Foley recognized the scar, and perhaps the gaze was due in part to the flashbulbs that were popping—or was it also due, in part, to the persistence of the past? Jesse L. Proctor, of Brooklyn, Avenue J, shown wearing the expression popular in the twenties, once worn by Lindbergh, by Lawrence, and known as the Lone Eagle gaze.

"Christ!" Foley said aloud, which was what he had exclaimed when he had bumped into Proctor, or Proctor into him, in the Hoffritz lobby near Forty-third Street.

"Sorry, old man," Proctor had replied, "not Him, just one of His humble servants," then he had turned and

limped off, still favouring that foot where he had shot himself.

## THE CAPTIVITY: II

But I go too fast. Before going to college I stayed out of school and worked for a year. I worked for Mr. Conklin, an insurance broker, and my job was to open and close the windows, put the bottled water on the water cooler, deliver signed cheques, and put the stamps on the outgoing mail. Mr. Conklin was a big man in the business, but after signing cheques most of the morning there was sometimes not much to do in the afternoon. He would step out of his office to see what I was doing, and if I wasn't doing very much he would say that he would like to have a word with me. We always had it in his office, where the chairs were more comfortable. He would first ask me how I liked my work, and I would say I liked it all right. Then he would ask me if I planned to lick stamps the rest of my life. I usually said I didn't think I'd like it very much. Then he would ask me what I expected to do with my life. What did I intend to make, he would say, of myself?

It had never occurred to me that I had much choice. My father had been a classics scholar, and I was following in my father's footsteps, but when I told Mr. Conklin that, he would slowly wag his head. He kept a glass of sharpened pencils on his desk, and when he heard that I was following in my father's footsteps, he would lean forward, take one of the pencils, and use the point to pick his teeth. It was what he did when he feared that he might be led to influence me. He didn't believe in that. He believed that every young man should decide for himself. Should decide, that is, to make something of himself.

That was the spring of 1927, and as an example of what he had in mind Mr. Conklin often mentioned Charles A. Lindbergh, a young aviator. He was making plans to fly from New York to Paris, entirely on his own. Mr. Conklin

read the papers every morning, coming down from his home in Winnetka, and he would clip out everything pertaining to Lindbergh and read it to me. He felt I should plan to do something of that order myself. I wouldn't have to fly, just so it was something that had never been done. Mr. Conklin himself, when he was no more than a boy, had come to Chicago from Ladysmith, Wisconsin, and lied about his age to get a man's job with Commonwealth Edison. The rest was history. If there had been planes to fly, or if, as it turned out, he had just been born ten or twenty years later, Mr. Conklin implied that Charles A. Lindbergh would have been too late. Since he liked to talk, and I was paid to listen, we would sit in his mahogany-panelled office and go over what he said life in America was offering me.

The windows of his office were over Clark Street. One June morning, when I opened the windows, half the people in Chicago seemed to be on Clark Street, or in the windows of the office buildings that lined both sides. That morning Charles A. Lindbergh came to Chicago, and Mr. Conklin held both of my legs at the window while I emptied our wastebaskets over the hero when he passed below.

I didn't see much of Lindbergh through the clouds of paper, but Mr. Conklin had placed a large bet on him, and with some of that money he bought me a large signed photograph. I pinned it to the sloping ceiling over my bed. According to Mr. Conklin, I resembled the Lone Eagle quite a bit. I was tall and slender, self-effacing, and said very little. I had no plan to fly to Paris, or anywhere else, but I let him know that my mind was not closed and announced my intention of going to college in the fall. If I should ever need money, Mr. Conklin told me, for the big hop to Paris, or anywhere else, I should let him know, and he gave my mother two shares of his stock to put away for me.

If you remember the college movies of the twenties, the healthy sun-bronzed boys, the long-limbed girls, the football field green as the grass around a Maypole, the cloudless

sky, the great eucalyptus trees, the orange groves like the labels on the ends of fruit boxes—if you remember these things you would recognize them when you saw Colton. The scenic props were all there; nothing had to come down or be put up. The Sugar Bowl, the Model T Fords, the ivy-covered buildings and the red-roofed dormitories with the view of the mountains that the prop man must have had in mind. The barren desert that glared in my father's photographs had disappeared. Hundreds of blackbirds, their eyes like hatpins, walked around under the cloudy mist of the sprinklers, preening and worming the green lawns.

When I arrived there was no one on the campus but the birds. An old man, a Mexican, watered the shrubs along the walk. The pits dug around the trees had been filled with water, the sandy earth soaked dark. I could hear water running between the shrubs, and see it moving, under a film of dust, between the trees in the orchards, or running clear in the channels where the earth was packed hard. A thin stream of it darkened the asphalt at the edge of the street. Water was everywhere, the sprinklers spit and hissed, but the cloud of mist low over the campus left no smell of morning freshness in the air. It was there, like smoke, and then just as quickly it was gone.

A young man with a hose was wetting down the gravel near the freshman dorm. I told him who I was, where I was going, and he squirted his hose in the direction of my room. Then he turned it aside, into the bushes, so I could go along the walk.

Our suite was on the top floor of the dorm, a long narrow room with bedrooms at each corner, and in one of them, sprawled out on the bed, was a young man. He lay on it rather than in it, and wore only the tops of his pyjamas. I made a racket coming in, but he didn't seem to notice it. Room B, at my end of the suite, was full of luggage covered with steamer labels, and four or five tennis rackets, in heavy wooden frames, were thrown on the bed. The bed had been slept in the night before and the covers

thrown back. On the desk in the room, the lid up, was a portable phonograph.

I unpacked my bag, hung up my clothes, then walked down the hall to the shower room, where I sat on the floor, in a cloud of steam, and washed the cinders and soot out of my hair. Then I took a cold shower and stood at the window, wiping it off. The window faced the east, the sun was still low and hot on the roofs of the nearby buildings and the leaves, dark and dustcoated, of a few old oaks. Beyond the oaks a green field, smoking with sprinklers, then the football field with the cinder track around it, and still farther beyond, white and glaring, a battery of tennis courts. A yellow sports roadster was parked in the gravel near the first court.

On the court the player threw up a ball, hit it, and as he threw the second ball up and hit it, the sound of the first, like a cork popping, came along on the breeze. The player went on serving as if each one was an ace, or out of the court. None of the balls he hit into the opposite court came back. I couldn't see that court—the scoreboard at the end of the football field blocked it off—but the player went on serving, hitting each ball hard. When he ran out of balls he picked up the green wastebasket he had brought them out in and walked slowly around the court, picking them up. There was no one else on the court. I couldn't see too well, but I could see that he was out there by himself. He wore a band around his head, and his wrists appeared to be taped. The rest of the courts, ten or twelve of them, were all empty. On beyond were orange groves, then a hot strip of desert, then the loaf-shaped foothills like folds of drapery, then the haze on the mountains and the milky haze on the colourless sky. Nothing moved, between the mountains and the campus, but the tennis player. Waves of heat blurred the yellow hood of his car, and I could see the white sweater spread on the seat to keep the leather from getting too hot. Nothing stirred or seemed alive that morning but the balls that made a sound like a cork popping and the white-banded wrists of the lonely tennis

player. His name was Lawrence. I had seen it on the steamer trunk in the hall and the racket presses lying on his bed. Charles Lawrence, of Troy, Indiana, the dean had notified my mother, would be in Room B—the room, that is, right across from mine.

When I came back to the room the fellow sprawled on the bed had rolled over on his back. His long legs were brown, with crisp golden hairs, and his feet stuck through the posts at the foot of the bed. One arm slanted across his face to keep off the sun.

I dressed, put on one pair of my new two-pants suit, hung up one pair, and put back on the shoes I had worn out on the train to take off the new look. Then I went off to look for something to eat. The young man watering the shrubs pointed out the mess hall, one of the new buildings on the campus, with the court ploughed up where they were planting olive trees. I walked around the court to keep the sand and gravel out of my shoes. The mess hall, a big, pitched-roof building, was part of the new unit of dorms. and there were men on ladders up in the gables, painting the trim. When I stepped inside I saw four or five students, in white aprons and jackets, seated at one of the tables, eating off the trays they had just brought from the cafeteria line. I picked up a tray and some silver, went down the line myself. I went the full length of the line without choosing anything. The woman serving the coffee told me to go back and come down again. I didn't know the rules, and there was so much food I couldn't make up my mind. I ended up with orange juice, bacon and eggs, hot biscuits, a coffee cake I saw after I had the biscuits, marmalade, a bottle of milk, a bowl of hot cereal, and coffee. The woman serving the coffee didn't bat an eye. I took a seat at one of the empty tables near the door. I could tell a freshman when he arrived, because each one looked around for an empty table, or they came in awkward, gawking gangs, like a bunch of kids. I could see how much good the year out of school had done for me. I didn't have too much of a beard—I hadn't had to shave since I left Chicago—but,

after sizing me up, these freshmen moved off and sat somewhere else. That would never have happened if I hadn't had a year of high finance.

I sat there till eighty or ninety of the freshmen had arrived. I thought Charles Lawrence or the tall fellow on the bed might turn up. They didn't, however. One of the upperclassmen, a sun-tanned fellow with a numeral sweater, rapped his spoon on his empty milk bottle and said he would like our undivided attention. All freshmen would meet in the olive<sup>6</sup>court, he said, at ten o'clock. At that time they would be driven into the mountains in upperclass cars. No freshmen cars, under any circumstances, would be allowed to go up. We would all go up in the old jalopies belonging to the upperclassmen, he said, and have a wonderful time even though we were freshmen, so to speak. That didn't get a laugh when he paused, so he repeated it. I didn't laugh, although I knew it was funny. I was sitting off by myself, and I could see that some freshmen thought I must be upperclass and driving one of the cars. The upperclassman repeated the time and the place, went over the rules about campus smoking, and said that there would be no smoking in the mountains because of the fires. In the fall of the year the mountains were very dry. If we smelled something burning it would probably be a freshman who had not got a card off to his mother.

I sat around till most of the freshmen had gone off. Then I walked back to the dorm, passing the jalopies with their upperclass drivers and the yellow sports roadster with disc wheels that had been parked near the tennis court. It was a foreign-make car I had never seen before. In the seat of the car was the green waste-basket, full of tennis balls that had been new that morning, for the boxes were crumpled on the floor. When I got upstairs I could see that someone else had taken a shower. I thought that would be Lawrence, because the wet tracks went down the hall and into our suite, but when I opened the door the fellow with the brown legs was drying himself. He was standing in the sun at the window, fanning the air with a towel. He was tall,



about six two or three, on the lean side but not quite skinny, with a good even tan but a bad complexion on his face and back. He had athlete's foot, and he had painted his toes with mercurochrome. When I opened the door the curtain at the window blew the other way, pressing on the screen, but he went on fanning himself as if he hadn't noticed anything.

"Pardon me," I said, "are you Proctor?"

He bent over and spread two of his toes. Using the towel, he dried the spot carefully, then looked at the mercurochrome stain on the corner. Without looking at me he said, "Who?"

"Proctor," I said, "Jesse Proctor. I understand he's in one of these rooms."

"Maybe that's it," he said.

"What?" I said.

"If Proctor's here, that must be Gamble." He snapped his towel at the luggage at my end of the room, the leather bags and steamer trunks covered with foreign labels.

"I think that's Lawrence," I said. "There's a Lawrence in Room B."

"Lawrence who?"

"Charles Lawrence," I said.

"Jesus Christ and little apples!" he said and stared at me. Then he walked past me to the door of Lawrence's room. He looked at the rackets piled on the bed and leaned in to see the record on the record player. "Well, fan my brow," he said.

"You know him?"

"You kidding?"

"All I know is that his name is Charles Lawrence."

"Walk on water," he said very softly. "Think of that." From a packet of cigarettes on the edge of the table he took one and tapped it several times on his thumbnail. He used that nail to strike a match, lit the cigarette, and blew out a cloud of smoke. All this time all he had on was his tan, not another stitch.

"My name is Foley," I said, "Peter Foley," for I still

didn't know who he was.

"Lundgren," he said, "Edward A., Long Beach, Palm Beach, Rex Beach, and Jack London."

He didn't step forward or put out his hand, and because of the way he looked I didn't either. I had never shaken hands with anybody in the nude.

"I don't think I know much about Lawrence," I said as he stood there staring at the luggage.

"You know what barbed wire is?" he asked. When I nodded he said, "Well, they sell it for money. A lot of people buy it. It makes a nice business."

"They make it?" I said.

"His old man invented it," Lundgren said. While I thought that over he added, "If not his old man, his old man's old man. It's in the family. Goddam barbed wire clear around the world." He hadn't finished his cigarette, but he stepped into Lawrence's room, looked around for a tray, then stubbed the cigarette on the corner of the desk. "Saint Cloud," he said, reading one of the labels. "Where the hell is that?"

"San Cloo?" I said. "I think San Cloo is just outside of Paris."

He did not turn to face me. "You been there?"

"I've done a little reading in French."

"That's nice," he said. "That's awfully nice, baby. That means you two will have something in common. Zan Klooo! Well, I'll be a sonuvabitch."

Lundgren had had smallpox at some time, and the lower part of his face was pockmarked. His head was big, but very knobby at the back, like the head of a kid.

"What a lovely goddam year I'm going to have, baby," he said and smiled.

"I guess Lawrence goes in for tennis." I nodded at the bed covered with framed rackets and several cartons of new balls on the floor at the foot of the bed.

"You ever hear of the Davis Cup, baby?" he asked.

I had heard of it, but I didn't know much about it.

"Well, they talk about this kid and the Davis Cup, baby,"

he said. Lundgren was six foot two, which was pretty tall, but I was pushing five feet eleven myself, and I wondered if he called everybody baby or just his friends.

"He was out on the courts this morning," I said, but I didn't say he had been out there alone.

"Probably why they sent him here, baby," said Lundgren. "Here he can just play tennis day and night. All he needs is just a pinch of that barbed-wide dough for the rackets and the balls."

He turned and left the room, "crossed to his own, and sprawled out on the bed the way I had first seen him.

"What a lovely goddam year this is going to be, baby," he said and groaned.

"Before I forget it," I said, "all freshmen are supposed to go up to the mountains. We meet in the olive court and go up in the upperclass cars."

Lundgren didn't answer. The draft through the window stirred the crisp golden hairs on his arms and legs. He was brown all over, except for the band where his swimming jock crossed his buttocks and the mercurochrome stains between his toes and the big pimples on his back. I went into my room, took off my suit pants, put on the khaki pants the dean had recommended, a shirt with short sleeves, and tennis sneakers with suction-grip soles. Then I took my new sweater and wore it with the sleeves tied around my waist.

It was half-past nine, and I stood at my window, looking through the tangle of vines at the campus, the grass dry now that the sprinklers had been turned off. Students were lying on it as if it had never been wet. In the street below my window were the upperclass cars, the yellow foreign sports car of Lawrence, and an Express baggage truck that had been backed up close to the door. Near the front end of the truck I could see the fake stickers on my own trunk. I had never been to Marquette, Illinois, or Northwestern, but I had found a store that would sell me the stickers and a bottle of shellac to keep them from peeling off. But I didn't want to be in the room when the Express men

brought it up.

From the door of the suite I said, "You want to tell Lawrence we're all going to the mountains?"

"I'll tell him, baby," Lundgren said. He had rolled over on his back, his head propped on a pillow, so he could lie there and smoke.

On my way down the stairs, between the first floor and the second, I had to press flat against the wall to let two baggage men pass with a trunk. I could read the small type on the French spa stickers as they passed my face. Behind the trunk, carrying three tennis rackets, the sleeves of his sweater looped around his neck, was the young man I had seen on the tennis court. For a tennis player he struck me as a little short, but he was wide in the shoulders and had very good arms. His hair was blond but cut so close to his head that it was like the fur lining of a helmet worn inside out. The cropped hair seemed to begin at his eyebrows, with hardly any gap for his forehead, the lower part of his face being the most prominent. The jaw was long, squared off at the bottom, and seemed to be out in front of his face, but that might have been due to the way he held his head. As he came up the stairs his right hand rested lightly on his hip. His elbow brushed against me, as if he hadn't noticed I was there, and one of the sleeves of my sweater slipped up and over his brown arm. I went on down to the bottom, from where I looked up and watched them make the turn at the top. I could hear him give the men directions in a very low-keyed voice. I think he tipped them pretty well—the first man down was smiling and his hat was still off when he stepped through the door into the sun.

We went up the mountain a little after ten o'clock. The frat cabins were above the timber line, but this particular mountain went up so fast, and the road along with it, that it was less than nine miles from the centre of the campus and the olive court. There were about twenty cars with about five or six of us to a car. The car with Lundgren and Lawrence was an old Packard touring, with a smooth, oil-burning, twelve-cylinder engine, two extra seats in the

back, and I could see Lundgren high on one of them. Lawrence was at the front, his right arm holding a bag on the running board. I was in the rumble seat of a Ford coupe with a boy named George, from Seattle, who had a small hole in his forehead to drain a sinus that was very bad. He talked most of the way, but I didn't hear anything. The wind was on my side and blew whatever he said back into his mouth.

We went up the wide, dry bed of a river full of boulders washed down in the floods, and big rocks that were scored where boulders and trees had dragged over them. We went up fast to a place called Baldy, where there were overnight cabins, hotdog stands, and clear mountain water spilling over the dam just above the bridge. There we began to pass the cars with boys who had got carsick. They would walk down the road, behind the cars, and bend over as if they had lost something. The altitude and the winding road were too much for them. Although we had been at the end of the line we passed every car except the Packard and arrived at the frat cabins at the same time. They had a very sick fat boy in the Packard, but they had let him be sick rather than stop, and he was still on the floor of the car, stretched out, when Lundgren got out. Not counting the sick boy, there were seven of us. Two upperclassmen, who were driving, myself and George, Lundgren and Lawrence, and the fellow named Proctor, who had been sick for a spell but held out. That ride made it clear who would run the freshman class. We sat around in the shade, on the pine needles, looking at the haze that concealed the valley and listening to Proctor and the upperclassmen talk. Neither Lawrence, Lundgren, nor I said much of anything.

So Lawrence and I were never formally introduced. I knew who he was, of course, but he had no way of knowing about me. Not that it mattered, since he referred to all of us as "old man." I mean he referred to the three of us, Lundgren, myself, and Proctor, as "old man," but the rest of the class he referred to, when he had to, as "old boy." There was a nice distinction there, but to get it you had to

hear his voice.

For the mountains he had taken off his tennis shoes, his white flannels, and his crew-necked sweater, and put on grey flannels without cuffs, a tweed jacket with chamois leather patches on the elbows, and a dirty pair of white buckskin shoes with red rubber soles. He hadn't troubled to tie the laces of his shoes or pull up his socks. Under the tweed coat he wore a turtleneck green jersey with the laundry tag showing on the collar. It was not what I'd expected of an heir to great wealth. He lay on his back, his hands cupped behind his head, where the brown pine needles made a carpet on the slope, one of the needles in his mouth while he listened to Proctor talk. I had always been under the impression that commanding personalities had high foreheads, but Charles Lawrence seemed to have no forehead at all. From the eyes up he looked more like a bird. His forehead seemed to slope back just that fast. As his eyes were not particularly friendly, the part of his face you looked at, when he was talking, was the wide mouth and the lantern jaw. He may have looked a little odd, though I think he looked better lying down.

All this time this fellow Proctor sat there and talked. When the upperclassman asked him where he was from, he said the Jewish Alps. I didn't know at the time that he meant the Catskills above New York. I didn't have to know that to think it was funny, but I didn't know how to take it, for it was clear that Proctor was a Jew himself. I had never met a Jew who talked like that about himself. Proctor told one story after another, most of them pretty funny, but nearly all of them having something to do with comical Jews. Some of these stories were good, but neither Lawrence nor Lundgren laughed. Once or twice I laughed because I couldn't help myself. Proctor was about average in size, with thick curly hair that he liked to run his hands through, a big expressive mouth, and friendly, sheepish eyes. He sat on the ground with his legs folded under, like a girl. Oddly enough, he was dressed quite a bit like Lawrence, with leather patches on his jacket elbows, dirty

white shoes, a faded red turtleneck jersey, and dirty sweat socks. That much was similar, but the effect was not the same. Lawrence didn't seem to care about his clothes, as if he found it too much trouble to tie his shoelaces, and Proctor didn't care either—but something about it didn't quite come off. If you wanted your white shoes to look good dirty, they had to be the best sort of shoes in the first place, and the patches on your elbows weren't supposed to be there to cover up holes.

We sat there on the slope for an hour or more, until the last car pulled up. While we sat around eating our box lunches we learned and sang the traditional songs, and were tipped off on how you could tell a Colton man, and why you couldn't tell him much. In the afternoon we were free to mill around and get acquainted, form teams to hunt for firewood, sleep, or go for a walk. Lawrence, Lundgren, Proctor, and I hiked up to the falls. On the way to the falls Proctor did a little sprinting up and down the road, whenever we crossed it, and Lundgren commented that he liked the way Proctor used his arms. Proctor said he wished he could say as much about his legs. He was a quarter-miler, and couldn't run the quarter on his hands. Lundgren asked him what his best quarter had been, and Proctor said he had run a fifty-one flat on a two-curve track, soggy as a mattress, and in the teeth of a driving rain. Lundgren said Proctor ought to run a fifty flat on the springy California tracks. He said he had had the same sort of trouble in Alaska, where he had tried to pole-vault off a grass runway, the pole too short, and had landed on his back in a piece of ploughed field. Proctor said he had seen many fine pole vaulters in Madison Square Garden and elsewhere, but he had never seen a man who had a better build for it than Lundgren had. Would Lundgren mind saying just how high he had gone? Lundgren said he wouldn't mind if it was understood that he had had to do his vaulting in a goddam pasture, dodge the cowpies, and with a pole that was something for propping up a clothesline. If that was kept in mind, he would say he had twice vaulted eleven feet.

Proctor said if Lundgren didn't vault twelve feet, maybe higher than that, before the first year was over—well, if he didn't do that they could ship him, Proctor, back to the Jewish Alps. We said the hell with that, and then Proctor wanted to know what my line was, because I looked like a miler, but I said no, that in the way of sports I hadn't got around to doing much of anything. Lundgren said you had to choose, and any man who spoke French, and knew French history as well as I did, could not waste his goddam time out on a track, running around and around. Then Lundgren said to Proctor, "Baby, you ever hear of a man named Lawrence?"

"Lawrence?" said Proctor, coming to a stop. "Don't tell me! Let me guess!" He thought for a while, his hand over his eyes, then he lowered that hand and wiped it on his pants, stepped up to Lawrence, looked him in the eyes, and offered his hand.

Lawrence took it, squeezed it, let it drop again. "Glad to meet you, old man," Lawrence said.

"What'll I do with this now?" Proctor said and held up his hand, the fingers glued together like a fin.

"Have a cast made of it, baby," said Lundgren. "Plaster cast. This hand shook by Lawrence."

"*E pluribus unum*," Proctor said, prying apart his fingers and pretending to read that inscription where his high-school ring had dug into the flesh. We all laughed at that, and Lawrence made a low bow.

We could see the falls from where we were standing, and on our way back, on the slope above the cabins, we could see smoke from the fires and hear the twang of a ukulele string.

"It's going to be a lovely goddam year, baby," Lundgren said and slapped his hand on my back.

In the evening we gathered in the main lodge, around the fireplace. We sang over all the songs we had learned and heard a few words from Stan Lowell, a football man, who told us that he had some very big news for all of us.



He had stumbled on it himself by the purest chance. He had just happened to run his eye down the list of the freshmen class. On that list was the name of a man who was internationally known, and he was going to ask that man to step forward at this time. Then he asked for quiet, and asked Charles Lawrence please to stand up.

Lawrence, Proctor, and I were sitting on a ping-pong table at the back. Lundgren was standing, leaning back against the wall. When Lawrence slid quietly off the table and just stood there, saying nothing, some of the freshmen thought it must be Lundgren that was meant. Beside him, Lawrence looked a little small. He just stood there, waiting, until Stan Lowell asked him to step up to the front. So Lawrence walked up and stood beside him, his back to the fire.

I couldn't see his face, with the light behind him, but against the fire he looked like a dancer; there was something nearly feminine, something a little insolent, in his pose. He stood with the weight on the balls of his feet, his hands balanced on his hips. Stan Lowell led the applause, then he said that it was hardly necessary to tell us that Charles Lawrence was considered one of the hopefuls for the Davis Cup. He for one, Stan said, would like to shake his hand, and he offered his hand, Lawrence shook it, and right at that solemn moment Proctor cried out, "Have a cast made of it, Stan!"

That brought the house down, naturally. We were all just a little tense till he made that remark. There was nothing particularly relaxed about Lawrence, and he made me think, the way he stood there, of a firecracker that had been lit but not gone off. He was so quiet, so intact, it made you tense just to look at him. Proctor's remark put an end to that, and when Stan Lowell called for class nominations, and then for quiet, I heard Proctor's voice. As luck would have it, he said, he knew just the man for the post. One who was quiet, self-effacing, but with a background of travel and experience that peculiarly fitted him for leading a class. He went on in this vein, then he paused

and mentioned my name. Everyone applauded, and he raised my right hand in the air. Stan asked if there were any further nominations, then moved that the nominations be closed, and I was elected by unanimous consent. Called upon to say a few words, I said that I would gladly accept the post, since I knew that my old friend Jesse Proctor would do all the work. That went over very well, and Proctor was elected class secretary. Stan Lowell then said that the sergeant at arms should be a man big enough to keep our meetings in order, and half the freshmen in the room turned and pointed at Lundgren, who was leaning on the wall. No official vote was taken. And that was how we wrapped it all up.

We topped the meeting off with doughnuts and cider, sang "Hail Colton, Alma Mater," then organized in five teams to see that all the fires were out. Lawrence, Lundgren, Proctor, and I went down the mountain in the Packard with Stan Lowell. We took it easy. We didn't use the motor all the way. Proctor said the road was like a ribbon of moonlight, and when we got below the fire area Stan Lowell and Lundgren lit up cigarettes. With the motor dead we could hear the whine of the suction tyres. The dry bed of the river looked wet in the moonlight, and when we were alone, with no freshmen cars behind us. Stan Lowell switched the headlights off. The blacktop road curved along the white river, the straps holding the top creaked like buggy harness, and far below, bobbing like lanterns, we could see the lights of the upperclass cars and the moonlight on the boys who had gone into the mountains with their pith helmets.

## FOLEY: 2

In the Philadelphia station, changing trains, Foley looked to see if the *Times* carried the story, and saw a photograph of Proctor with "a faded blonde companion" on the front page. Her faded blonde hair showed, but not her face, because she had hid behind her handbag as the flashbulbs popped. Something in the gesture seemed a little old-fashioned, like the camera dodging of Greta Garbo, and indicated that this woman was perhaps more faded than she looked. A fossil of some sort, like Proctor himself. Fished up from the past, the murky depths, in the haul of the Committee nets.

The year the banks closed Foley had a letter from Jesse Proctor, the first in several years, asking if he could visit Foley and spend a night or two in his room. Foley thought Proctor might be thinking of going back to school. Taking the degree, he would need to do a little teaching or get a better job. Foley said sure, and a week or so later Proctor appeared. He had spent the day hitch-hiking down from New York and arrived wearing army-store dungarees, Sears Roebuck work-shoes that blistered his feet, and a soiled khaki shirt with a leather, gas-station-type bow tie. A paper bag of fig newtons bulged out the front of his shirt.

Although he had only one suit of clothes himself, Foley felt tainted with capitalism, a white-collar serf living off the fat of the poor man's land. During Proctor's stay he hid his carton of cork-tipped cigarettes. He wore soiled white sneakers with loose crepe soles that flapped. Proctor did not attend any of Foley's classes, nor had he come with the idea of going back to college. He came down to use, as he said, the facilities. The chairs in the mess hall, the bumpers of cars, the steps of any building where the

students gathered, served Jesse Proctor as a suitable podium. He closed every discussion—as he termed his lectures—with an invitation to spend the evening, and the night too, going into matters further in Foley's room. Seven to ten students, as a rule, put in the full night. Foley lay on the bed near the window, listening, night after night, to the theme and variations Proctor played on one word. *Disinherited*. Proctor was. Had been, literally, since Lawrence. So it made sense enough for Proctor. But why did it make sense for the others? Thousands of them. The word, in Proctor's mouth, seemed to cast a spell. They had all wondered what they were, and now they saw. They were disinherited.

Proctor's work—for the time being—had been cut out for him. He slept in frat rooms, the back of campus cars, on porches, in parks, and sometimes in guest rooms where the change of linen he always needed was put out for him. He made, understandably, quite a name for himself. His educated feet learned to walk in his proletarian shoes. Foley saw snapshots of him, in his homespun beard, crouched on his haunches like a hill-billy, photogenically dangling or chewing on a spear of long-stemmed grass. The disinherited, it turned out, were everywhere. In Omaha, in Cedar Rapids, and in the shrubs of those pent-house gardens where, it would seem, they had inherited everything. In Walla Walla he recruited a corps of Seventh-Day Adventists. The Gospel according to Marx was his text but not, strictly speaking, his subject. His subject, for the time being, seemed to be himself.

A year or two later, for the time being, Foley often saw Proctor's name in the list of rally speakers, or his face in the choir surrounding Eleanor Roosevelt. A pale, secular monk, camera-conscious, his barbed-wire scar luminous in the flashbulbs, clearly destined to be one of the boys in the nation's back room. And then—then came the bombing of Guernica. Before Foley knew that he had gone (Lou Baker, that year, had been convalescing), Proctor had entered the Spanish war—and made his exit from it. A grenade had

gone off in his hand—one he had caught when it was thrown at him—and he had buried the two dangling fingers, like lovers, in Spanish soil. Weeks later, from Madrid, Foley received a postcard of a Spanish whore, her blouse unbuttoned on the hand-painted nipples of her breasts. On the back:

*For the time being, old man, I'm a casualty in your little allegorical war. We arranged to keep it in scale so you cool boys could study the pattern. Act One, as they say, in the Spanish theatre. Spring here. How is the dogwood at Valley Forge?*

The dogwood, as a matter of fact, was beautiful. Foley drove out there to read the letter, the first one in months from Lou Baker, that brought him up to date on such things as Proctor and the Spanish War. Proctor a live hero—for the time being—but two fingers gone. And then, a year later, he stopped fellow-travelling—one of the rats. Lou Baker said—equipped with radar—long before the disciples, swooning and lovelorn, left the ship. Where did he go? For the time being no one knew. But on, it turned out, to another belief. The choir boy whose voice would not settle down. Pushing forty, but his voice still changing, a fresh, 'cocky, chamber-of-commerce note the summer Foley stumbled on him in the Sloane House. Up to his ears—for the time being—in World's Fair canes.

And then? One day Foley spied him on Fifth Avenue—and avoided him. With him, there on the corner, a boy in a low-crowned, wide-brimmed hat, holding a bundle of clothes tied with a string. Dark ringlets of hair, braided, framed his solemn, flour-white face. Foley thought he was Amish—but no. A ghetto Jew. He held fast, like a child, to Proctor's three-fingered hand. They stood there together till a uniformed chauffeur picked them up.

Foley called Lou Baker, and from her he learned that Proctor was in the import business. The importation of Jews, for the time being, a specialty. Flown in from Spain, Portugal, Mexico, and South America—in his own planes. And in New York they were conditioned, as in an air

chamber, to a different climate of existence, then flown on to relatives, friends, spas, or out of the country again. And the ghetto boys? Proctor called them his dividends. With every five that could pay, one such boy was thrown in free. That was the story, as Lou Baker told it, but the imports dwindled with the rise of Zion, and Proctor, for the time being, took up something else. The Voice, now unmasked, of America.

"Christ!" Foley said again, folded the paper, and walked through the train to the smoker at the front, where one of the trainmen sat in a seat across the aisle. He was carefully smoothing out the pages of a Washington paper he had found in the car. Foley watched him, remained standing until the trainman had worked through the paper to the front and passed a heavy hand over the smiling face of Proctor, now unmasked. Expression of a man given up for lost, miraculously found alive.

Foley took a seat, wiped from the window the hair oil of the man who had been leaning on it, and saw that the world was more or less as he remembered it. Wide, sluggish bend of the Schuylkill, spire of an unnamed church, acropolis hulk of the Art Museum, and the trees along the river lush and dark green under the pale English water-colour sky. Opening the paper, he read :

WITNESS CITED FOR CONTEMPT  
*When Asked What He Was Doing,  
Says He Was Eroding*

"I was eroding," the witness had said, and that was how he looked. All the soft gentile topsoil, the nonfurrowed regular guy, the comical Jewish clown, had eroded away. Leaving bedrock. A flood-scored Jewish bedrock showing beneath. Foley remembered the first joke Proctor had told them—might have been the first thing he said—about the house full of Semitic baroque in the Jewish Alps. That was gone. That had eroded, leaving no trace. A white scar

across the jowl indicating where the anchor might have dragged.

Foley took a penknife from his pocket and with the nail scissors attached snipped out the picture of Proctor on the front page of the *Times*. Lou Baker might like to see it. Just the picture. Not the interview. She had prophesied—in one of her recurrent Delphic traumas she had prophesied—that Jesse Proctor, self-styled Jewish clown, would return to the faith of his people. Had he? There was just a suggestion that he might have gone back farther than that. Not so much a prophet now as a martyr. Showing his wounds. Throwing open his shirt front to show the public his wounds.

The clipping safe in his pocket, Foley trimmed his nails. The blades of the shears were not what they used to be. Like everything else. He had had the knife for twenty-three years. On the blade he examined the fading trademark, the pair of Henckels twins, Solingen. The best. None too good for the Lawrences. The knife had turned up in the fine tweed jacket that hung in one of the Lawrence guest rooms, and Mrs. Lawrence had suggested that Foley should take both the jacket and the knife. Some Lawrence—she didn't know which one—had left them there. There had been dozens of well-groomed, wealthy young men in and out of that room.

Foley had been neither well groomed nor wealthy that summer, but he had come back from France with the body of Lawrence, who had died, it was said, of a lovely cornada, a horn wound. That was almost true, and might have been true if it had been anybody but Lawrence, for he had been badly horned in an amateur bullfight in Pamplona. Peter Foley had been asked to bring the body back to Troy, Indiana, Lawrence's home town. He had been put in the guest room at the end of the hall, in a house that was like an empty dormitory, and in the closet of that room he had come upon the jacket and the knife. His own clothes were soiled, so he had worn the jacket while he was there. It fit him well—as Proctor would have said, it did something

for him. They were closing up the house, and Mrs. Lawrence had insisted that he take it along. Foley had worn the jacket back to Chicago, where his mother saw the chamois leather patches on the elbows and said that he could wear a patched coat in the house but *not* out on the street. His mother did not know that was what the boys were wearing at Princeton and Yale. She didn't know that leather patches were a sign of class, just like very dirty white buckskin shoes or the old Pierce-Arrow that Mrs. Lawrence preferred to all the new cars. His mother didn't know that life had taken a turn and that Mrs. Lawrence, in her old clothes and cars, was already anticipating the age of the vulgar nouveau riche. People who could buy *anything*, that is, but the class that went along with an old Pierce-Arrow or the feet that went into a pair of Lawrence's shoes. Proctor had known it, however, and he had been the first to pick it up. But his position, from the start, had been ambivalent. There was a point in Abercrombie & Fitch, as there was in sex and the Ten Commandments, which he could see beyond but beyond which he could not go. "The rich are different from us" was said by one who really knew. Peter Foley had known it the day he put that coat on. They had more money, but having more money was not at all the same as being rich; only the truly rich knew how to enjoy the money they had. Which was why Peter Foley had put that jacket away for nearly ten years. He had not worn it once at Chicago, where he took his degree; nor at Columbia, where he did some graduate work. When the moths had eaten it so badly that the patches on the pockets made it look real, he began to wear it, as a sort of smoking jacket, around his own room.

The Lawrence family, so far as Foley knew, still had their home place in Indiana, but the family had dispersed, and he had heard them mentioned all over the world. Troy had been a sort of park, a memorial almost, to the legendary head of the family, the old man who had invented barbed wire and stretched it around the world. Back in the twenties the members of the family, far flung as a rule,



and trained professional gadders, would come back to Troy for a few weeks every summer, some of them with new children, old guests, or new brides, to drink the fountain of youth as it was dispensed by Grandfather Gans. The man who had invented, so long ago it seemed childish, a way of twisting two straight wires together so that a few barbs, headless nails, were held fast in it. Other men had thought of it too, dozens of them, but the man whose barbed wire took the field was Colonel Clayton Gans, founder of the barbed-wire empire.

Out in back of the mansion, in a sort of arbour, was a stretch of barbed wire about fifty feet long, with the wires at one end fastened to the hub of an old grindstone. Using that grindstone, pedalling the treadwheel, Colonel Gans had twisted his first piece of wire, and between the wires, every foot or so, he had inserted a nail. Later he had gone along and snipped off the heads. That piece of wire and the nails were still there: still well enough preserved to illustrate the idea. The strength and twist of that wire showed in old Colonel Gans, in the sinews of certain members of the family, but it had come through clean, without a flaw, in Charles Lawrence, the old man's favourite grandson. The one who had made up his mind to be a tennis player.

Lawrence had been called home from school that year to see the old man die. Since it had been at Christmas he had asked Foley to come along. And Foley had gone because he liked Lawrence. That is, he admired him.

The big thing Foley admired in Lawrence was the thing that didn't show much. His money. Foley thought it was very nice to have it but ill advised to work for it. Part of Lawrence's charm was that he already had what most people thought they wanted, without the ill effects that came from having to work for it. Foley's charm, for Lawrence, was that he openly admitted it.

They went back on the train because blizzards were reported in the Middle West. Foley put in his time on his outside reading, and Lawrence played a game of solitaire

at which he cheated in the morning, but in the afternoon he played it straight.

"Well, I'm cheating now, Foley," he would say and ask Foley to watch him. Not that he cared about the game so much, but he didn't want to cheat himself covertly.

They came into the town of Troy from the north-west. There had evidently been two railroads in the town at one time, for they crossed a railbed buried in the snow and passed a signal tower with the lights shot out of the semaphores. A narrow country road without a track of any kind ran along beside the train. The whistle scared up a rabbit, and he raced along in the ditch that bordered the tracks. The coach shadows were on that side, and the rabbit paced the train, staying within the shadow, running up to the bright edge, then darting back, the way a big jack would stay within the lanes of the car lights till the road made a turn.

They came into the town like a wagon train, on a level with the road. They came in easy, the bell clanging, through the empty backyards of the big houses, the coach windows flashing when they passed close to the sheds and the barns. The dark smoke fanned out through the trees of the park, and they came up and went by several crossing bells, but the roads were empty, and nobody's children had made tracks in the park. Nobody else got on or off the train when it stopped. Down the street snow was banked on a no longer revolving barberpole.

They stood in the clean snow on the platform till the train pulled out. As the last coach passed they looked into the park at the snow-covered cannons, the swings and teeter-totters, and the bandstand where the shingles were black on the slope facing the sun. On the far side of the street an old air-cooled Franklin was parked at the curb. The motor was running, and the chauffeur sat erect, gripping the wheel. Lawrence raised his hand, waving it at him, but the old man held the wheel like the reins of a team that might, at any strange sound, bolt away from him.

"This is Peter Foley, Hawley!" Lawrence yelled, but the

old man didn't seem to catch it. He wore a cane hat, like a train conductor, with a hackdriver's licence fastened to the front, and as he eased out the clutch he sucked in his cheeks, then puffed them out. "Hawley came out with Grandfather, old man," Lawrence said, then they went back in the tracks the chauffeur had made coming down, the straps that held the top on snapping like wires in the cold air.

They went around the park, then turned into a drive that was lined with snow-covered cars: out-of-state cars, with a wide assortment of licence plates—Connecticut, New York, Wisconsin, Illinois, and a car from Florida without a top. The snow lay thick on the lap robes that had been left in the seat. The house sat in a grove of big trees, at the back, and as the car moved around behind it Foley saw that the blinds were drawn at the windows on the second floor.

They entered through a door near the kitchen, where the smell of coffee was strong in the hall. Foley caught the smell of ether and burning logs that came through the double doors they passed, and the sound of a spoon rocking in a glass. An elephant's foot, like a huge leather bucket, served as a post for the railing on the stairs, and someone had drawn faces, with red lipstick, on the toenails. They had started up the stairs when a voice cried out, "Where the hell is everybody?"

It came from the room where the log fire was crackling. A woman's voice said, "Now is that the way to talk?"

"Where the hell is everybody?" the voice replied, and a glass rattled on the table beside the bed.

"They're asleep," the woman answered, "but they won't be if you make a noise like that," and Foley heard her hand slap the pillow and then smooth down the sheet.

"This way, old man," Lawrence said and led Foley to the second floor. Rows of stuffed animal heads, some of them with antlers, all of them wearing hats, woollen scarves, and driving goggles, lined both sides of the long hall. They seemed to lean out of the transoms above the doors and

roll their glass eyes at Foley as he walked by. "Hope you don't mind a little bullshit, old man," Lawrence said and led Foley to the last room on the left, where a giant teddy bear, with eyes that bugged, sat up in bed. He was wearing horn-rimmed glasses, a Princeton dink, and a brown-derby button that said "I'm for Al."

Foley took a shower, using a bar of soap that was wound up tightly in long strands of blonde hair, and wiped himself with a towel that had lipstick on one corner of it. Then he stood at the window, looking down the driveway at the row of parked cars. Where the hell was everybody? Asleep, the woman had replied. Under the new fall of snow that also seemed to be true of the town. Nothing moved anywhere. Time seemed to have stopped. Foley did not hear the steps in the hall, but he knew, before he turned, that he would find somebody standing in the door. She carried a tray with two steaming cups of coffee, the steam rising from the cups clouding her glasses.

"Dickie!" she cried. "Dickie!" And the tray she was holding tipped toward Foley. The spoons, then the cups and saucers, began to slide. He lunged toward her, but too late. One of the cups bounced on the rug, but the other fell against a chair leg, caromed against the baseboard, and rolled under the bed.

"Mother!" Lawrence cried, coming up behind her, and took the empty tray out of her hands.

"It's not Dickie?" she said.

"It's Peter Foley, Mother."

"I wondered what had come over him," she said, then dropped down on her knees, like a girl, and felt around for the cup under the bed. She was a very small, slender woman, the type Foley's mother described as mousy, meaning they were quick and nimble, not slow and easygoing, as she was herself.

"Let me get this coffee," Lawrence said. Some of it had splattered on Foley's pants, and one of the spoons had flipped into the cuff. "It's a feather in your cap, old man," Lawrence said. "Mother only spills things on people she

likes." He used his handkerchief to wipe off Foley's shoes, then he passed it to his mother, who was reaching for it.

"This floor needs waxing, Charles," she said, and crawled around on her knees, sopping up the spilled coffee. She found a hairpin, which she filed in her hair, an Indian penny, which she handed to Foley; then she went into the bathroom, filled the bowl with hot water, washed the handkerchief, and spread it to dry on the mirror. What Foley's mother might have done, but she would not have done it in her bathrobe, the tassel dragging, while a boy in his second year of college stood watching her.

Coming back into the room, she said, "Charles is like his Grandfather, Peter"—as if the thought had just come to her.

"She means Grandfather thinks he knows everything," Lawrence said.

"He does not know how to die," she said and hung the wet napkin over the towel bar.

"Mother!"

"Well, he doesn't," she said, and then she noticed the box of face powder on the bureau. "What in the world—?"

"Dickie," said Lawrence.

"Your grandfather was asking about him," she said and placed the lid back on the powder, pressed it down, and fanned at the cloud of dust that had squeezed out.

"Mother," Charles said, "if Grandfather is so—"

"Go tell him you are here, Charles." She put the empty tray in his hands, the box of powder on it, and Charles left the room.

Mrs. Lawrence went back into the bathroom to rinse her hands. From there she said, "I don't really see how you can stand him, Peter," which was what Foley's mother would have said if he had brought Lawrence home and she had got him alone. Then she would have waited for Lawrence to say how marvellous he was.

"Charles is not so bad, Mrs. Lawrence," he said, because she gave him the impression she knew her son pretty well. She didn't answer that but drew the blinds at the window

to keep the sun off the green bedspread.

"Sometimes, Peter, I just wish he would break both of them." She was facing the window, gazing down the drive at the roofs of the snow-covered cars, and Foley thought she must be seeing whatever it was she wished Lawrence had broken. He looked, but he saw nothing to break.

"Both of what, Mrs. Lawrence?" he asked, but her mind seemed to have moved on to something else. She lowered her eyes and ran her hands into the loose sleeves of her robe. Foley thought she might be cold, in the draught from the window, but she did not move away from it.

"I might have known it," she said.

"What is that, Mrs. Lawrence?"

"He didn't tell you," she said. "I might have known he wouldn't tell you," and suddenly pushed back the sleeves of her robe, rubbing her hands on the arms and wrists that were more like those of a girl. She thrust out her right arm, the small fist clenched, and flexed it at the elbow, slowly, as if it hurt her. When she did that Foley understood.

"He broke it?" he said, and could see Lawrence's arm, the one he never flexed, poised on his hip, like a dancer's.

"They said he'd never be good at anything," she said. "He can't throw with it. He can't even bend it," and she doubled up her own arm, the fist close to her face, to show him what she meant.

"I don't see how he ever did it," Foley said.

"Skiing," she replied. "He did it skiing."

But that was not what Foley meant. What he meant was that he didn't see how Lawrence got away with it. How with one bad arm he played such marvellous tennis, and how with one good arm he shaved, brushed his teeth, combed his hair, and gave the impression that he wasn't really trying.

"He can do whatever he has a mind to," she said. "It doesn't seem to matter if he kills himself trying."

Foley believed that himself. He knew Lawrence well enough to see the truth in that. But he thought she must be worried about Lawrence and Proctor, because it was

Proctor, just the year before, who had almost killed himself with Lawrence's gun, while riding in his car.

"Mrs. Lawrence," he said, to put her mind at ease, "You'll never catch Lawrence shooting himself."

"Not unless he has a mind to, Peter," she said and lowered the blind another notch at the window. She said it so calmly, so matter-of-factly, that Foley heard it, but it did not penetrate. "His Grandfather would shoot anything," she said, "and he is worse than his Grandfather." Then she turned from the window, for someone in the hall was calling her.

"Mother!" Charles called from the landing on the stairs. "Oh, Mother—it's Grandfather!"

"Excuse me, Peter," she said and left the room.

As she hurried down the hall Foley could hear her knocking on all the doors. "Hurry, please" she said each time she knocked. "It's your Grandfather!"

But that was not it. Almost, but not quite. He had a stroke, he lost the sight of one eye, but four days later the crisis had passed, and the snow-covered cars parked in the driveway drove off. They went off. Foley remembered, crowded with the clever people he had never met, like a caravan of Princeton cars leaving the Yale bowl after a defeat. The following day he and Lawrence took the train back to school.

"This seat taken?" the woman said, took it, then leaned over Foley to tap on the window, wave at the child, the dog, and the man on the leash. The train jolted, she sat down, then arose to take from the seat the front section of the *Times* and smooth out the wrinkles she had ironed into Proctor's smiling face.

## THE CAPTIVITY III

One of those tarnished mirrors they hang on walls to cover up cracked plaster or peeling paper hung on the wall in the middle of our suite of rooms. Thanks to that mirror, I came to know Proctor's room as well as my own. If he was seated at his desk, or lying on his bed, it reflected him. If he wasn't there I saw his desk, with the pair of chipped Lonely Indian bookends, or his bed with the blanket from the Brooklyn Y.M.C.A. Over the towel rack on his door he had towels from the La Fonda, in Santa Fe. He kept his two pairs of shoes under the bed, on trees he made out of wire coat hangers, and in one drawer of his desk he kept a green metal cashbox with a padlock and key.

The rest of us had suitcases in our rooms, or mailing cartons we shipped our laundry home in, but Proctor said he couldn't stand to have his room all cluttered up. He did his own laundry, and he had learned to travel light, with just his typewriter case. The typewriter meant a lot to him; he would oil it with a feather whenever he used it and put it under his pillow when he was gone long from his room.

He kept a pad of yellow paper in a drawer of his desk, and in the water glass he took from the bathroom he kept eight or ten pencils, with their sharpened points sticking up. He sharpened the pencils with a knife shaped like a woman's leg and honed down the points on a piece of fine-grain sandpaper. Proctor majored in English, with a minor in French, spent four hours a day washing dishes in the mess hall, and did what studying he had to late at night. Between the Lonely Indians on his desk he had four books. *The Story of Philosophy* and *The Sun Also Rises* had library numbers on the spine, but *Peter Whiffle* and the other one might have been his. That one had no spine, but Proctor had printed his name on the flyleaf as if he were the author



of *This Side of Paradise*. They were books I hadn't read, but I planned to when I got the time.

Lundgren's room was usually full of a strong yellow light. He liked to sleep late and kept the yellow blind at his window down. He liked to wear army shoes, with army pants, shirts, and socks, and when whatever he was wearing got dirty he took off the shoes, stepped into the shower, and washed the pants, shirt, and socks right on his body. He took them off to wring them out, then put them back on to dry. That way he didn't lose, he said, any of the body heat he liked to conserve.

Under his bed a wooden locker with a screw-down lid, the letters U.S. ARMY stencilled on the ends, held his extra army shirts, socks, and several years' supply of mercuriochrome. On his desk he kept a magnet, a tin pie tray with steel shavings that responded to the magnet, a large magnifying glass, a dissecting kit, a small geologist's pick with a sharp-pointed end, and a Kraft cheese box in which he kept rock specimens. *The Field Book of the Skies*, with the maps marked off by the ribbons he had won pole-vaulting, was usually on the chair, with his Lucky Strikes, beside the bed. The sky charts in the book were easier to study when he was lying down.

If Lundgren was in his room he was usually on the bed, his feet through the iron rails at the end, his head propped on the pillow, and the air full of smoke. If he was not in the bed the room looked unoccupied. *The Field Book of the Skies*, the small pick, and the magnifying glass would be gone. The tin plate with the metal shavings looked like something left by the cleaning woman. He never used an ashtray because he didn't like the smell of stale cigarettes. When he was down to a butt he removed the bit of paper, rolled it into a small wad, and dropped the tobacco on the floor. It was like sawdust in a bar, he said, and kept the dust down. He worked out on the track from two to four, in the mess hall from five to seven, and did most of his studying in the library over at the Physics Lab. He took a straight science major with R.O.T.C. instead of Physical

Ed.

Whenever I walked out of my room I faced Lawrence's. He left one trunk in his closet, and several of the bags were under his bed. The trunk was a wardrobe, and he left his clothes in it, as if he couldn't bother to unpack them, and one of the larger steamer trunks we set up in the centre room. That was Proctor's idea; he thought the steamer labels helped the atmosphere. The trunk contained racket frames, each one in a press, and the presses screwed into special racks so that the frames wouldn't rattle when the trunk was tossed around. Some of his bags had held nothing but cartons of English tennis balls.

Lawrence had no pennants on his walls either, but in October, from New York, he received a big carton full of Hudson Bay blankets, football robes, canes with Ivy League pennants, and a half-dozen pillows that he asked us to distribute around the room. He didn't want them on his bed, and they gave our big room a very nice touch. He came supplied with grey flannels, white flannels, dozens of shirts, several jock straps with silk mesh pouches, made in France, but he didn't have a tie of any kind and had to borrow one of mine. In the evening, at dinner, we all had to wear coats, ties, and buttoned shirts. I let him have my good tie, saying, at the time, that I thought it was a pretty infantile custom, but he said, "When in Rome, old man, you know—" and gave me that smile. At first I thought he might have braces on his teeth. I had seen girls with braces smile like that.

I may have looked for the braces, for he said, "Just a small chip, old man, but the cold air, you know—" and showed me a very small chipped edge on a front tooth.

"I didn't even notice it," I said.

"Came down on the ten-foot board," he said, slipping my tie around his neck. "Notice it as soon as the air gets a little cool."

Lawrence had no pennants on his walls, but there were two photographs on his desk. One was Cochet, the French Davis Cup player, crouching for a low volley at the net,

and the other showed a young man with a nude woman seated on his lap. He wore a stiff straw hat and was sitting on a wire-backed drugstore chair. We all took a good look at this picture because we thought it must be faked. The woman had her back to the camera, and the young man was leering over her shoulder. The strap marks from the bra the woman had taken off showed up very well. A pair of long black sheer stockings had been left on. The picture had been taken somewhere in France, for there was French dialogue painted on the backdrop, but most of the words were not in my Larousse. It was signed "Love and kisses from us both, Dickie," and there was no indication that it had been faked.

Between the two photographs Lawrence had an onyx pen and pencil set, a glass paperweight containing a sea-horse, and a small travelling clock, in a leather case, with an alarm. The alarm went off every morning at six o'clock. He would get up, brush his teeth, then fill the green wastebasket with balls, take along several rackets, and drive out to the tennis courts. He would practise by himself till seven-thirty, then come back and take his shower, have his breakfast, and go along with Proctor to his nine o'clock class. Three times a week, from three to five, a pro from Pasadena would come over and slam drives at him or try to lob over his head. Lawrence would hit everything, or try to, before the ball bounced. He would volley from the baseline as well as from the centre of the court. All kinds of tennis were new to me, but this was new to the old tennis players, who found that his razzle-dazzle game more or less unbalanced their own. Lawrence either netted the ball, hit it out, or put it away. It was more like badminton than tennis—as if all the ground strokes had been ruled out. But you couldn't talk to Lawrence. That is, you couldn't tell him anything. Lawrence was on his own, but the coach let it be known that a kid named Crewes, who played for Southern Cal, would pin his ears back in the spring.

As he had lived all over Europe, Lawrence took his major in languages. He spoke French very well, and while living

in France he had been tutored in German and English. The name of his tutor was Richard Olney Livingston. Livingston had gone to Oxford, was now at Princeton, and turned out to be the Dickie on the photograph, the leering young man with the French moll on his lap. Lawrence would have gone to Princeton himself, if Princeton had been in California, on the Riviera, or any place where he could play tennis most of the time. He had come out to California because the California game was fast.

On my own desk was a snapshot of my mother holding one of Arlene Miller's new Belgian hares, one of the few that the male had not eaten out of the last batch. Between my father's bookends, two chunks of marble said to be part of the Acropolis, I had his set of Rabelais, in cracked morocco, and his *Oxford Book of Greek Verse*, with the translations he had written in the margins forty years ago. I would get up when I heard Lawrence's alarm, work on some vocabulary until breakfast, then walk with Lundgren or Proctor to our first class. After class we would end up together in the aisle or on the concrete steps out in front, quite a bit like the filings in Lundgren's magnetic experiments. Lawrence was the magnet, but I doubt very much if we'd often have got together, or stayed together, if Proctor hadn't manipulated it. He was drawn, of course, but he didn't want to do it all by himself. That was true of all of us, but it took Proctor to figure it out; he wasn't afraid, as we were, of making a fool of himself. He didn't seem to mind if he wasn't left holding the bag alone. He would yell, "Hey, Foley! Here's Lawrence!" just as if I'd been looking for him; or say to Lundgren, "Hey there, beanpole! Here's Foley," although Lundgren never had anything to say to me. But I don't remember any of us holding off or pointing that out. We were all feeling the pull, and Proctor just gave us the excuse.

I know that when we walked together other groups of freshmen would step to the side. We gave the impression of being a pretty solid outfit, I think. One reason we gave this impression was that we let Proctor do all the talking and

stood around listening, as if giving him support. We would go along abreast, around the big Lab buildings, then out on to College, where the whole student body, after the nine o'clock classes, would wait for Chapel in Smiley Hall. We weren't really that solid at all, which may have been why, at the start, Proctor had to carry the ball and keep up a line of talk. I think he felt if he didn't we might just walk away from him.

The steps were reserved for the upperclassmen, and the big crowd of freshmen, the freshmen that mattered, were between the rails that went along the sidewalk at the front. Proctor would sit on this rail, and the rest of us would stand facing it. Looking up the street, up the lane of trees that made a green tunnel toward the mountains, I could see the tawny fire break that went along the ridge to the big Colton C. In November some of the freshmen went up with shovels and rakes and cleaned it off. On a clear day it seemed to rise above the campus like the bright green dink Lundgren was wearing, and wherever you saw Lundgren, in the morning, you would find the rest of us.

There were more girls than boys at Colton, but somehow they didn't cut any ice with us. The Colton girls were in the big dormitories or the sorority houses I could see from my study window, and about two hundred Phipps girls were on the new campus a few blocks north. The Phipps school was more or less new, with a Maxfield Parrish campus and some smart girls, but the Humanities programme didn't give them too much free time. The Colton boys, as Proctor said, had a pretty wide choice. The Colton girls were mostly of the type that might have come from homes like mine, but Phipps featured girls of a different type. They had more, as a rule, of what Proctor referred to as "class." When the Colton women threw a dance in the gym there was a band at one end, down under the basket, with something like a no-man's land out on the floor. The Colton stags, over on the north side, would stand facing the Colton fillies near the door, with two or three sophomores running around clipping the lambs. There was very

little of that sort of thing at Phipps. The Phipps girls had more know-how, and if the music stopped when you were dancing with a Phipps girl she didn't act as if she was being compromised, as Proctor pointed out. I didn't dance that year, but I could see the point in what he said.

At the weekends Proctor would go up to Phipps, Lundgren would look around for a Garbo movie, Lawrence would go to bed, and I would work at my desk. If my window was open I could hear the two bands playing at once. The Phipps band was better, with a crooner out from Los Angeles. A little after midnight they would break up, since some of the boys had to get back to Cal Tech. I would see the lights of their cars up on Foothill Boulevard. The local boys would come down through the orange groves, smoking their cigarettes. Some of the upperclassmen, with the upperclass girls who had taken out two o'clocks, would ride over into the wash to do a little necking, or go for a ride. Proctor would sit on the floor in the shower and sing "Sometimes I'm Happy." I was not indifferent to girls, myself, but I was a full-time scholarship student and had my father's reputation, as Proctor put it, around my neck. I was interested in making an agreeable impression, as my mother said. What I had seen of Colton I liked, and it had crossed my mind that Oberlin, where my mother had gone, would not be quite the same. It snowed back there. It would never suit Lawrence's fast type of game.

## FOLEY: 3

A scene in hell, a cloud of sulphurous smoke dense and powdery as a pill dissolving, shot through with orange flames, burning like flares, and the dark suspended shell of the Pulaski Skyway. Along the train bank through the marsh grass a fringe of vomit-green froth, a signboard advertising clothes for fat boys, and a grey film of sewage on the surface of a river of pitted lead. The coach lights came on, the windows darkened; in the glass, as in a mirror, Foley saw His reflection—the Devil's horned profile and his leering smile of good fellowship. As the pressure built up in Foley's ears he closed his eyes, swallowed hard, and said, "*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate*"—then let the cool, dank air at the bottom of the tube blow into his face. As the train began to climb he stood up in the aisle, slipped into his coat.

On the track level at Penn Station he went along the platform to the escalator, rose one level, then blocked the stream of traffic till he sighted an empty phone booth, headed for it. Inside the booth, facing the eye-level sign that always left him confused, if he troubled to read it, he waited for the wobbly needle of his compass to settle, straighten him out. Then he closed the door, and in the dim light he examined the list of Lou Baker's phone numbers, decided on the last one, and dropped his nickel into the slot. Heard it clink through the machine like a loose part, and then nothing. Took time now to read the sign and read all calls were ten cents. He found another nickel, tried that.

While waiting for her voice Foley usually reflected that there was a book, of some sort, in Lou Baker, perhaps a better book than the one she had written herself. For more than twenty years, to a wide range of people who had never heard or set eyes on one another, Lou Baker was a

legend as well as a link in a curious chain. Twenty years ago, for the time being—every move Lou Baker made was for *the time being*—she had accepted a position, for the summer only, of tutoring the child of a big theatre man. That was the beginning, the opening chord, of a sort of tone poem that had no climax but endless variations on the same haunting, plucked-string theme. A tutor, a governess, a travelling companion, the anonymous author of well-read memoirs, and the companion of ladies, characters, and assorted, as well as unsorted, gentlemen. Always for the time being. Always a makeshift in the interests of *her work*. It happened to be, as Foley finally observed, the well-wrought urn of her own special gifts, the mobile salon of culture in the machine age, the free-lance Mme. de Sevigne, who held her seance wherever she happened to be working or boarding, opened and closed a romance in a five-day crossing, and somehow kept intact, however labelled and battered, the girl who had been the first one Foley had kissed. Over the years, and now there were many, hundreds of devotees had been exposed to the performance, most of whom fancied they saw through it, and all of them—except Foley and Proctor—had been glad to ring the curtain down, *finis*, and wonder who the hell it was that Lou Baker was currently stringing along. And all the time there was this book, a suitcase full of it, opened up and re-examined in dozens of apartments, spread over card tables and chairs in a score of attics, arranged and rearranged, long, fermenting evenings, in the drafty summer houses left vacant for the winter, turned over to Lou Baker and the gemlike flame of her art. It seemed impossible that so much concerted effort would not produce a book. That it would ~~not~~, like other such labours, come to honour all the strangers who appeared in the foreword, up to that moment unaware of one another, but without whose money, whose attic or summer cottage, without whose wife and, on occasion, her husband, this book would not have been, as the foreword would say, as good as it was. For what was good, thank her friends; for what was not



good, blame Lou Baker, the humble author. That was Montana Lou, the girl with short, cropped hair and the profile of a consumptive English poet, husky tobacco voice, radiant smile, and an air of the breed so obvious and rewarding that publishers took her to lunch, or chipped in further advances, not because they still believed that a book was forthcoming but because Lou Baker had the ring of gold in an age of brass.

And when that phase had passed, when it was more or less clear that no book of any kind was really forthcoming, there were several hundred people, maybe thousands, who would settle for the real thing. *The raw material*, as Lou Baker described herself. There were always a few, but not too many, Lou Bakers, and the market for the *real* product was enormous. Only the best agencies paid the highest fees for her wares. She had sat on Swiss balconies, like Hans Castorp, listening to people with real and imaginary troubles; and she had sailed around the world, been involved and uninvolved, but if involved it usually left her so exhausted she would have to take a trip and a rest cure somewhere, herself. At such a time, right out of the blue, Foley might receive a card from Taxco or Juan les Pins, informing him that she was suffering from scar tissue around the heart. Their little game, their little code, and Foley would sit down and rush off a letter, all in all the finest things he had ever written, summing up all of the world's known cures for scar tissue. She had never answered one of these letters, not by a line, but he knew that she kept them. He had run into people who had heard passages. The next word, for such it would be, would come around Christmas, or New Year's, the operator asking him to please hold the wire, that Santa Fe, Monterey, or Bermuda was calling, and then the voice of Lou Baker, husky, coughy, and a little bit tight.

"This Foley?" she would say, and then, "This Lou Baker, Foley's chick."

But now she said, "Yes?" and he heard something fall as she turned on the bed.

"This Foley," he said. "This Foley's chick?"

"Oh, God!" she said. She meant it, she had actually gasped it, and he said nothing. She said, "Is this *Friday*?" Friday was the day Foley usually called her.

"Monday, Lou," he said, wetting his lips, and when she did not reply he said, "You see the paper?"

She coughed, creaking the bed. Somehow he knew that she had.

"Who's the faded blonde accomplice you suppose?" he said, to cheer her up. Faded blondes always cheered her.

"Who you think?" she said.

"No idea," he said. "I'm not a member of the Party," then forced a laugh to indicate how he meant that.

"That's too bad, Foley," she said. "We need members, and I'm the kid's faded blonde accomplice."

He opened the door of the booth; a little fresh air might help. In the glass panel of the door he saw the shine of sweat on his face. "How is he, Lou?" he said. "How's Proctor?"

"He's here in bed. You want me to ask him?"

Foley did not breathe. He kicked the door with his foot to get more air. He wanted time to run out on the call, and the coin to clink—but nothing happened. He heard the smothered twanging of the springs.

"Who in Christ's name is it?" the voice said. Hoarse from talking.

"*Him*," she said, as if they had been waiting. As if they had gone to bed with his name on their tongues and knew that he would call. He heard the padded phone base drop on the floor, then the drag of the cord across the bed-clothes.

"That ~~you~~, Proctor?" said Foley.

"Good morning," said the voice, falsetto and sunny, "Goldberg's Spa and Breast Developer on the Boardwalk."

"How are you?" said Foley.

"Shit to the eyelids."

So he was all right then. Same old Proctor. "That's fine," said Foley. "I mean, it's good to hear your voice."

"I have several," Proctor said. "Which one you like me to use?" Foley did not reply. Proctor cleared his throat and in another voice said, "What brings you to Elsinore, old man?"

Foley tried to think, thought of something, and said, "You know what day it is, Proctor?"

"Hmmmmm," Proctor said, "Mother's Day perhaps?"

"Anniversary," said Foley, standing by. "What anniversary it is?"

"This woman here in bed your wife maybe?" said Proctor.

The phone clicked, the operator signalled that his time was up.

"Look, old man," said Proctor, "why don't you come over? Why don't you get a bottle and come on over?"

"You still—I mean, she's still—"

"Same old stand," said Proctor. "Same apples. Say you let us get some shut-eye, then come on over."

The operator cut him off. He stood there in the booth listening to the buzz. He was free, he realized, to let the matter drop or to show up later. He was not committed. A state of mind that came to him naturally. He sat there in the booth, the door open, listening to the man in the adjoining booth drum his fingers on the glass panel of the door. Voice of party on the line like that of Lou Baker, Montana 1907, Sorbonne '29, free-lance pagan-Christian and girl about town, paranoid, Anglo-Irish, troubled in mind, Freudian before cocktails, Jungian when tight, sometimes drawn toward Schweitzer, then Eva Perón, rude to waitresses, salesgirls, and artists with beards, but great promoter of old and new masses, attracted to male Jews, hairy young men with good legal training, preferably Harvard, physical type prone to peanuts and growing bald early, something of Helen, more of Cassandra, strong sense of guilt and opportunities wasted, fond of Leslie Howard, Joel McCrea, tin-roof sundaes, Peter Foley, but at the moment in bed with J. Lasky Proctor, very old friend and importer of Jews.

"All right, go to hell then," the male voice said, kicked the booth door open, and stepped out to smile at Foley. Short, square man, corseted waist, double-breasted suit with handkerchief sewn to the pocket, topcoat hanging open so he could hook four fingers into pockets of coat. Effect of broad shoulders, trim waist. Habitat—usually seen around phone booths in Sun Ray Drug departments and United Cigar stores. "The two-timing little bitch," he said, pocketing the paper matches Foley had passed him, and walked off smartly on not quite invisible Adler Elevators. So he could be taller than she was—but perhaps he was not. Seeing man approach vacant booth, Foley snapped his door closed, sealed himself off.

Why hadn't Lou Baker married?

Not thought to be the marrying type. Why hadn't Foley married her?

When he had the impulse there hadn't been the time, and when there had been the time he lacked the impulse. Besides—besides, she wouldn't have married him. She didn't like to wake up with a man who still had things on his mind.

Why hadn't she married Dickie? Might be that she had never been asked. Back at that time, and place, marriage like long underwear on a chorus girl. Old-fashioned protection for troubles she was paid to suffer from. Through the glass in the door, the panel smudged by a child who had licked it while waiting, ogle-eyed, for his mother, Foley could see the Métro station at Raspail and Montparnasse. Where he had first seen Lou Baker and Richard Dickie Livingston.

That had been his first night in Paris, just eight or nine hours before Lou Baker bit him, and he was standing there smoking his first Caporal Jaune. He heard them, talking English, come up the Métro stairs. Through the railing he saw the smart fellow with a girl on each arm. The girl on his left wore her hair in braids, like the tails of well-bred horses, and the girl on his right had her hair in a pompa-

dour, like a man. She wore an oversize, dirty camel's-hair coat and a pair of soiled Mexican huaraches on her bare, dirty feet. The coat was too long, too wide in the shoulders, and she wore the collar turned up high on her neck. Something new, Foley recognized, in the way of class. They crossed the street to a table at the Dôme, back under the awning, and Foley found a seat with a front-on view of the girl with the braids. She had a fine skin, small, close-set ears, a way of showing the tip of her tongue when she talked, but Foley found it hard to picture a man roughing her up. He caught her eye, just once.

She turned to the young man and said, "Honey, you like to take the rap for me?"

"Love it, chick," he said, sizing up the situation. He stalked up to Foley. "Livingston speaking. Would it be Stanley?"

"No, it would be Foley," Foley replied.

Livingston screwed his neck around to leer at the girls, then suddenly stopped as if he had cracked it.

"How is Lawrence, Livingston?" Foley went on, following up his advantage, but Livingston let him wait till what advantage he had had passed.

Screwing his neck around slowly, Livingston said, "I got an extra chick on my hands, old boy. Montana born aus Bryn Mawr chick," and led Foley over to the table and introduced him to the girls. The braided number was Pamela Crowley, Lawrence's fiancée, and the chick aus Bryn Mawr was Lou Baker, Montana for short.

"Foley knows Lawrence, you chicks," Dickie said.

"Does he know that he's crazy?" Pamela asked.

They looked at Foley, and he said, "I lived with Lawrence for two years."

"You're in," said Dickie and took a pair of castanets from his pocket, clacked them. He ordered an amer picon for Foley and a second mandarin curacao for himself.

Everything would have been fine if Foley had just kept his mouth shut. It should not have been hard. He had nothing to say. But that was his first night in Paris, his first

apéritif out on the sidewalk, and *being* in—he wanted to show how far in he was. So he casually said that he hoped Lawrence's car wasn't ruined.

"Why should it be?" Lou Baker had said.

"According to Proctor," Foley said, "he, was hurt in his Novillada—"

"Oh, my God!" Pamela said and pulled off one of her gloves. While she twirled the rings on her fingers nobody said anything. Then she put the glove back on, and Dickie said, "A novillada is a sort of bullfight, old sport."

"Oh," Foley said and looked at the sweat on the palms of his hands.

"If you want to be a bullfighter, old man," said Dickie, "what you do is arrange for a novillada. If you have money you can arrange it."

"What the hell is so wrong?" Lou Baker said. "Why the hell should he know about a novillada?"

"He might want to own one," Dickie said. "A twelve-cylinder Novillada."

Pamela laughed. "Excuse me," she said.

"So he was hurt by a bull?" Foley said.

"He was punctured," said Dickie. "A very lovely cornada."

"A cornada is a horn wound," said Lou Baker.

"A horn wound in the groin, dear," said Dickie.

"I'm awfully goddam sick of these distinctions," Lou Baker said.

"Was he hurt badly?" Foley put in.

"Truly, he was not goodly," Lou Baker replied. "For him it was bad, but for the bull it was good. The bull loves to gore good."

"Very amusing," Dickie said.

"Dickie does not like my talk, Mr. Foley," she said. "It is not good. It reflects his latest reading. It is bad to be so influenced by one's reading. It is good to be influenced by one's environment only."

Pamela said, "Ha!" then covered her mouth as if she had been warned about that. "If I'm rude," she said, "it's be-

cause I'm faint with hunger." She took a compact from her purse, looked at her face, and smoothed out the lines that formed when she smirked.

Someone kicked Foley under the table, and when he looked up he saw it was Dickie.

"Like to wash up a bit, old boy?" Dickie said, and Foley followed him back between the tables, around the bar, and down the stairs to the men's room. As the door swung behind them Dickie took out his wallet, checked over the notes, and made an equal division. He passed them to Foley. "Take her to Voisin's, old man. Take her to Duval's. Take her anywhere she likes."

"Take *who*?" Foley said.

"Take your pick."

"Look—"

"I got to feed these chicks, old boy, but they won't slobber out of the same trough. Lou Baker doesn't seem to like the upperclass type of bitch."

"I'm not much for that type myself," Foley said.

"She's yours!" Dickie spat on the palm of his hand, then took Foley's hand and shook it.

"Who?"

"Lou Baker."

"Look—"

"Don't let the Bryn Mawr slouch fool you, old boy. Awfully nice kid."

"I'm not thinking of the slouch," Foley said.

"We'll go over it later." Dickie felt around in his pocket and took out a key. He gave it to Foley. "Make yourself at home."

"I'm at the Pension Lussaud," Foley said.

"What for?" Dickie said, and he was gone. He pushed through the doors and left Foley standing there, the money in his hand. So Foley had washed his hands, combed his hair, and allowed time for Dickie to make the division; then he went back upstairs, hoping to God they would all be gone. But Lou Baker was seated on a stool at the bar. She had a tall glass in her hand and a tired smile on her

face.

When Foley stepped up to her she said, "I was wondering if you'd make it," and gave him the package of Caporal Jaunes he had left behind.

"Make what?" he said and tried to look surprised.

"Up your mind," Lou Baker said and blew a cloud of smoke into his face. Then she slipped from the stool and hooked her arm through the one he offered her.

"Nobody goes to the Café d'Harcourt any more," she said. "We're nobody. Suppose we go there?"

So that was where they had gone. And that was where, and when, it all began.

In the phone booth Foley noticed the air was bad. He opened the door, stepped outside, and let the momentum of the crowd carry him forward—or was it backward?—to where he stood with others in a line. With the others he rose, on the escalator, toward the opening looming like a cave's mouth, toward the morning stars singing together in the galaxy of neon signs.



## THE CAPTIVITY: IV

In November we began to get fog in the morning, and around six o'clock, when Lawrence got up, the dormitory was like a freighter anchored at sea. The mountains, the campus, even the trees below the windows, had disappeared. Although the fog was very bad for his rackets, and so thick he couldn't see the lines on the court, Lawrence practised his serve, fog or no fog, as usual. He would stretch clean towels along the net cord and put up a music stand, with a coat draped on it, to indicate the player in the opposite court.

I'd wake up when I heard Lawrence's alarm, but in November, if it was foggy, I might lie in bed for another half-hour till the heat came on. It would be another hour or two before Proctor or Lundgren got up.

One morning Lawrence was a little late—he had opened his trunk to get a new pair of rackets—and I heard Proctor say, "Like to give a new man a few pointers, Lawrence?"

I thought he was kidding. Some joke he'd stayed awake long enough to pull. Lawrence stopped twirling the screws on his press, but he said nothing.

"Seriously," said Proctor, "you think I'm too old to pick up the game?"

"Not at all, old man," Lawrence said, "but I'm too old to give you any pointers."

"I was just kiddin'," said Proctor, "but, as a matter of fact, I'm thinking of tryin' a little tennis. What the hell can I do with the quarter mile when I get out of school? Can't take the track along with me. Like to pick up something I can do out of school."

"I think they do it in the Y.M.C.A.," said Lawrence.

"Not me," Proctor said. "I'm no bald-headed quarter-miler. What I'd like is a game I can play with my friends."

Play with my wife, kids, et cetera. I won't be like you, anyhow. I won't be too good to play with my wife."

"Helen Wills strokes a nice tennis ball," said Lawrence.

"Don't see her as my wife," Proctor said. "Ever notice her muscles? Why don't I just pick up a few pointers myself?"

Lawrence didn't answer.

"You waste an awful lot of time out there," said Proctor, "picking up the balls after you hit 'em. Why don't you let me do that? Why don't I stand over there and hit 'em back?"

"Old man—" said Lawrence after a bit.

"I know just what you're going to say," said Proctor. "You're going to say I can't keep my big mouth shut. I swear to God I won't say a word, not a word—even if I'm hit!"

"You ever play the game?" Lawrence said.

"I know how to keep the score. Look," he said, "let me do it just once. If you don't like it you just say so. I swear to God I don't go near a tennis court again."

When Lawrence didn't answer I heard Proctor bounce out of bed.

"Got a racket," he said. "Borrowed a racket. You wouldn't happen to have an extra pair of shoes, would you?"

"What size, old man?" said Lawrence.

"I wear any size," said Proctor.

Lawrence went back into his room, opened a bag, tossed one shoe at a time across the room.

"Right with you," said Proctor. "Just a sec. How the hell'd I know I'd be takin' up tennis? Christ, man, these fit me like the eighteenth century!"

"You ready, old man?" said Lawrence, and they left.

As they went down the stairs I heard the frame creak on Lundgren's bed. He rolled over on his back and said, "Like to give me a few pointers on whoring, Foley? Like to take up something I can do at the office. Christ, man, you can't pole-vault at the office. Like to take up something I

can do with my wife, your wife, or even one that ain't even married."

"You think he's serious?" I said.

"Dead serious," said Lundgren. "What to do after school is a very serious problem. I was thinking of not doing anything—but how the hell you do that? Takes practice." I didn't answer. "Point is, baby, that all we're doin' is just thinkin', but our little friend here is busy doin'. He just goes ahead and does what poor suckers like you and me just think."

"I wasn't thinking of taking up the game," I said.

"Don't be a goddam boob," Lundgren said. "He's not takin' up tennis, he's takin' up Lawrence. The only pointers he wants are on a piece of barbed wire."

I didn't reply to that, and Lundgren intoned:

"JESSE PROCTOR  
Vice-prexy in charge of  
LAWRENCE  
BARBED-WIRE EMPIRE OF AMERICA"

"I don't know as I'd want that job," I said.

"Baby," said Lundgren, "that's exactly why Proctor is going to get it. He isn't squeamish. He isn't afraid of his own thoughts. If something needs running, he's the man to run it. You notice how nice and smooth he's runnin' all of us?"

"Well, if somebody has to do it," I said.

"I didn't think anybody could do it to Lawrence. I thought that kid could wipe his own arse."

"I'm not too sure he can't," I said.

"Mark my words, baby," said Lundgren, "tōday marks a change in the barbed-wire empire. If you're thinking of taking up tennis yourself, the man to get your pointers from is Proctor, not Lawrence."

I got out of bed, to get away from Lundgren, and took my towel and my toothbrush into the bathroom. I had once left my toothbrush in the rack for them on the wall.

We all had. It was Lundgren who said he had found his own toothbrush wet in the morning, with the spearmint flavour Proctor so much admired. I didn't believe that, but I now kept my toothbrush in my room. I didn't seem to know, that is, what I really believed: I brushed my teeth, using my Dr. Lyons powder, and faced the billowing streamers of fog that shut off the mountains and hung low over the football field. I could not make out the scoreboard or the curve of the cinder track. I could not see the tennis courts or Lawrence's yellow car, but when I stopped brushing my teeth I could hear the fog-smothered, cork-popping sound of the racket on the ball. There were no voices at all, and the popping came at the usual intervals.

The following morning the drumming of the shower in the bathroom woke me up. I thought it must be Lawrence and that I'd slept right through his alarm. But Lawrence usually took his shower later, after he'd put in an hour or two of practice, and I was wondering about this when I heard his desk alarm go off. He was still in his bed—I heard him roll over and shut it off. Then I heard Proctor's wet feet cross the floor. He called out a cheery "Good morning!" to Lawrence, and while Lawrence was getting up I could hear Proctor bouncing a ball on the floor. When Lawrence was ready to go Proctor said, "Hope these foggy mornings don't warp your rackets, old man," but Lawrence did not reply, and they went silently down the stairs.

When they were gone Lundgren said, "I do hope, sir, these damp mornings don't shrink your imported jock straps!" and snapped the elastic band at his pyjama waist.

I didn't want to lie there thinking about it, so I got up, went over to the mess hall, and did a little reading till the cafeteria line opened up.

All that week the fog rolled in from the sea and hung around the treetops until late in the morning, when the warm clothes you'd put on early in the morning were suddenly too hot. One morning Lawrence's car wouldn't start. He and Proctor had to walk the half mile to the courts and

then walk back. A day or two later, late at night, one of Lawrence's strung-up frames split open, making a sharp, twanging sound like a broken piano string. Lawrence got out of bed to see what had happened, then went back. In the morning he was up again at six, and Proctor, with the racket he had borrowed, stood out in the hall, fanning it at the air, and waiting for him.

Then we had a short spell of dry wind off the desert, a high brown haze screening off the mountains, and a fine film of dust, like face powder, on everything in the rooms. The glare was bad, and, sitting in the classes, we would turn our eyes from the windows or wear the dark sunglasses they were selling cut-rate in the Co-op. The first morning of the wind, from the bathroom window, I could see the tennis courts and Lawrence's car, but I couldn't see Proctor anywhere on the court. I thought he might be in the wash, looking for a ball that had bounced out. Then I saw him. But he was not on the court. At the number one court they had put up some seats to seat about thirty or forty people, and Proctor was seated on the plank at the top. He was leaning forward, on his knees, watching Lawrence serve. Back in the seat of the car I could see his borrowed racket, strung, as Lundgren said, with butcher's twine, and Lawrence's white sweater tossed over the steering wheel. Lawrence went on serving until he ran out of balls, then Proctor picked them up.

Over the weekend it was foggy again, and I went to see a night football game with Proctor; the high punts would disappear in the fog and made the game interesting. After the game we walked back across the campus to the Sugar Bowl. Proctor usually liked the girls better than football, and when he'd asked me to go to the game I'd thought I'd better go. I knew there was something on his mind. We sat in a booth at the back of the room where the upperclass dates were dancing, and we could hear the music through the backside of the radio.

Proctor wanted to know if I had noticed anything. I

said I had noticed that he'd taken up tennis. He didn't mean that, he said, and neither did he mean the usual sort of gossip. but he just wondered if I happened to have noticed anything. About what? I said. About Lawrence, he replied. I said the only thing I'd noticed about Lawrence was that he really minded his own business. I guess that does for me then, Proctor said. I said I didn't mean any more by that than what I'd said. The trouble with a bloke like himself, Proctor said, was that he talked so goddam much all the time that when he finally had something to say, something important, nobody would listen to him. I said I thought there might be a touch of truth in that. Proctor said that what he had to say dealt with Lawrence, and he had picked up the idea that I sort of liked Lawrence.

I said I admired him very much.

That wasn't what he meant, Proctor said. Any goddam fool could admire Lawrence, but *liking* Lawrence was something else again. He did. He had the sneaking notion I did too.

Well, I wouldn't say that I *disliked* Lawrence, I said.

Let's take a walk, old man, Proctor said, and then I let him pay for my hot chocolate. I knew he was currently sensitive on that point.

The fog was not rain, but the mist was so heavy that it gathered in drops on the leaves, then fell like rain on the gravel along the walk. Where the path cut in between the orange trees on the campus Proctor stopped. "You mind if I smoke, old man?"

"Not at all," I said, but right up to that point I didn't know that he smoked. A quarter-miler who expected to run a fifty flat shouldn't smoke.

"I don't inhale, old man," he said, "and I don't smoke unless I really have to." He took a single cigarette from the pocket of his shirt, a pack of paper matches, and lit it. When the match flared up I thought his face looked sweaty, but it might have been the fog.

"Old man," he said, blowing out the smoke, "couple mornings ago we were out on the court—he was out on

the court, and I was sittin' watchin' him." He stopped, then said, "I found it was better to get clean off the court while he was serving, then go in and pick up the balls when he was through."

"I see," I said.

"Well, I was sittin' there waitin' to do just that. He threw up a ball, caught it, then said, 'Old man, perhaps I better tell you.' 'Tell me what?' I said. 'My right arm, old man, is a bit longer than my left one.' I didn't know what in the hell to say, so I said, 'So what?' 'It's from the tennis, old man,' he said, 'the right arm is a bit over-developed.' He put his palms together, out in front, and showed me how his right arm was about an inch longer. 'Well, I'll be goddamned,' I said. 'I'm a little touchy about it, old man,' he said, 'so I rest the hand on my hip. You've probably noticed that,' he said. 'Hell no,' I said, 'never noticed it at all.' "

"I think you do notice it," I said.

"Hell yes," Proctor said, "but I wasn't going to say so." He threw the cigarette away and spat out the tobacco crumbs. "You see, Foley?" he said. "You see what I mean?"

"Sure," I said, although I didn't.

"It was me that made him do it, old man," he said. "Me out there sittin' and starin' at him. If it hadn't been for me he might not have noticed it."

"I wouldn't say that," I said.

"I'll swear to God," he said, "he's never told another human being. I'll swear to God I'm the only man he ever told."

"You couldn't help that," I said.

"The hell I couldn't," he said. "If I hadn't been there he'd never have said it. If I'd shut my goddam big horsy mouth he'd never said a word."

I didn't deny it.

"I feel like hell," he said. "I guess I just had to tell someone."

"I know how you feel," I said and raised my right hand towards his shoulder, but whether he saw that or not he

pulled off. I dropped my hand. "Well, I don't think anybody else needs to know it."

"What I want," said Proctor, "what I want is for *him* to feel that way."

"I think he probably does."

"Jesus Christ, old man—*isn't he wonderful?*"

"He's quite a character," I said. I'd heard somebody call him that.

"He's got *it*," said Proctor. "He's really got *it*."

When I didn't reply to that he said, "Goddam it, Foley, I don't mean money. I don't mean all that goddam barbed wire."

"I know you don't," I said.

"I just wish to Christ I thought so," he said and suddenly bolted off, running, and I heard his shoes crunch in the wet gravel.

The cigarette he had dropped was still alive in the path. As we were out of bounds for freshman smoking I stepped on it. Not far ahead he stepped off in the grass, where I couldn't hear him running, and I stood there in the fog, listening to the leaves drip on the walk. When I got near the dormitory I could hear music blowing down from the dance at Phipps and see the car lights on Foothill barely creeping along in the fog. Proctor was in the shower, singing, when I got to the top of the stairs.



## FOLEY: 4

Above the pyramid of oranges, grapefruit, and bananas interlarded with sheets of tissue paper and tinfoil, the hands of the clock said 10.17. Foley took out his father's watch, saw it was three minutes fast, said, "Ahhhh," and returned it to his pocket.

"Black coffee, right?" said the clerk.

"Right," said Foley.

Clerk smiled and winked. Foley returned it. Big, raw-boned Swede, three kids out in Queens, always asked Foley how things were growing in the country. Seemed to have picked up the idea that Foley was some sort of country gentleman.

"How's the country?" he said.

"Little warm," said Foley. "How's it in Queens?"

"Hot," he said. "Plain Danish, right?"

"Right," Foley replied and watched him turn and flip tongs, flip plate to go under Danish, turn and flip fork before spearing chip of butter, flip knife before placing it on counter. As if trying its weight, dipped, then raised coffee cup beneath spout of coffee, spilled some into the saucer, emptied saucer into drain, spilled a little more from cup sliding it down the counter, followed by cup of sugar cubes that caromed off menu rack. Waste motion? No. Male lead in the Schrafft's midmorning ballet.

Into his coffee Foley dropped one cube stirred, then crunched it with his spoon. Three lumps of wrapped sugar he dropped into the coin pocket of his coat. Habit formed during war. Needed it himself. Single man and bachelor expected to give his sugar coupons to faculty wives with sweet-starved babies. Faculty men lost weight, fattened wives explained by sharp starch rise to get same food value. On the raw end of the Danish he had sliced Foley

spread the butter, took a bite. Turned over in his mind, while chewing, the problem of a lonely lunch. Lou Baker was out. Proctor was out. (They were in bed, that is, together.) Which left Richard Dickie Livingston or Allen Blake. Dickie Livingston had money, time, and excellent taste but required a rather strong palate. The last time Foley had called him, at his New York place, his wife's Filipino had answered, Foley had given his name, then heard the voice of Dickie.

"Finkel's Fortifying Leechbake on the Hudson, good morning! Patrick O'Casey speaking."

"Look—" Foley had said.

"Fear of sex and Semitism," Dickie had continued, "allergic symptom nine-oh-nine! Refer you to Glossary, New and Revised Edition of 'Livingston's Manual Modern Semitic Warfare.' There you will find that Livingston is a bastard, Lou Baker is a bitch, Foley a spineless egghead, but Jesse L. Proctor is a long-suffering, wall-weeping Jew. He cannot be a bastard, an egg-head, or a bitch, because that would be anti-Semitic. All men are brothers, saith Saint Gide, except those who are really fond of each other."

"You through?" Foley said.

"Sonny," Dickie said, "I'm the only man you know without a trace of concealed anti-Semitism. All out in the open. Clear and sunny as a day at Jones Beach. Where'll we eat lunch?"

They went to Town and Country, where Foley liked the popovers, and Dickie talked for an hour or more about this guy Proctor. He couldn't leave him alone. He couldn't leave him alone because Proctor had never struck back. Not a blow. As much as any man might, Dickie Livingston had shot another man down, like a bird in flight, clipping him in a way that left him living but without use of his wings. And what had Proctor done? Nothing. He had not struck back or taken another shot at himself. He had become, after twenty years, J. Lasky Proctor, importer. So Livingston's prank, the neatest trick of the decade, had

proved to be the trauma of two lives. Life seemed to have stopped, for prankster and victim, right at that point.

Dickie had proved to be a very durable playboy, grey at the temples and the liver, yet a boy at heart; but it had always been the 4th of May, 1929. The night before the big prank, like the rally before the big game. But now something had happened, the obscure Jew was in the eye of the TV camera, and the revenge he had put off for twenty-three years was there in his lap. All he had to do was mention, no more, the name of Richard Livingston. The Park Avenue playboy, sometime husband of Pamela Crowley, the tin-can heiress, who had had her pretty hands in all the good causes long, long long ago. Just mention the name, that was all, and leave the rest to the Senator from Wisconsin. But J. Lasky Proctor mentioned no name but his own. Was he protecting Lou Baker, Dickie—or his own buried past? The one that they had waited, for nearly twenty years now, to sprout. Foley didn't know, he had no idea, but with the pictures of Proctor in the morning papers he would not be having lunch with Richard Livingston.

That left Allen Blake, Foley's publisher. There was a time when Foley called Allen Blake fairly regularly. Just about as regularly, Blake took him to lunch. They usually went to Cherio's, where they would see other editors and authors, including Max Perkins, who might be sitting on a stool at the bar, alone. Blake was something of a kidder and liked to say that he had brought Foley there at a certain risk, what with Perkins and the boys on the look for new talent and that sort of thing. That was pure baloney, but Foley loved the smell of it. He often saw some of the big shots of the literary world, heard the latest gossip that was being circulated, and came away with raw material that he could polish up for the faculty teas. Foley was the only man on the campus with a book that anybody had a corner on, or could give you the impression of how a certain author struck him, personally. But after several years of this it began to taper off. Foley went on calling, of course, and

Blake was always simply dying to see him, but right at the moment, as a rule, he was all sewed up. So Foley stopped calling, and in the past few years Blake stopped sending him that Christmas book, or special Christmas card, that the house mailed to their authors every year.

Foley hadn't called Blake in four or five years, but he had never forgotten the number, and he seldom came to town without its crossing his mind that he *might* give him a ring. He had even gone so far as to work out in advance what he would say. He had gone even farther—he had worked out what he thought Blake would say. He would call, get Blake's secretary, and casually tell her that Peter Foley was calling.

Then he would hear Blake's voice, and he would say, "Allen, this Foley."

"Well!" Blake would say. "Well, well, Foley. Speaking of the devil, I was just talking with Lewis here about you. You remember Lewis?"

"That a fact?" he would say, not remembering Lewis.

"Lewis was saying good deal nostalgia right now. Good deal fresh interest in the twenties. Said we ought to get busy and set a fire under you."

"Well!" Foley would say, then he would clear his throat and say, "As a matter of fact, Allen, started a sort of little fire of my own several weeks ago. May be part of this feeling. Some sort of spontaneous combustion. Anyhow, I'd say it was going along pretty well right now—"

"Well, I've never heard sweeter music," Blake would say. "I'd say that's the best news I've heard in weeks."

"Ought to have it in hand next month or so. Last chapter pretty important. Whole goddam book sort of hangs on it. Without the right summing up might wonder what the hell the book's all about."

"I remember your pointing that out," Blake would say.

"Well, I think I'm on the right track now," he would answer.

"That's the greatest goddam news I've heard in months," Blake would say. Then he would add, "Just glancing here

at my schedule. See that I'm sewed up as hell right at this point. Big Fall List conference coming up this week. You picked a hell of a week."

"Understand that," Foley would say. "Just thought I'd give you a buzz and tell you how things were going."

"Best goddam news I've heard in years," Blake would say.

"Well, be seeing you, Allen," Foley would say, then hang up quick before something spoiled it, or Blake might ask him just what day the manuscript would come in.

This conversation often seemed so real—if he was sitting in a bar or at the back of a movie—that Foley sometimes thought it had actually taken place. He might take the train back with the idea that he was all set to get to work. On that last chapter. The one, that is, that would sew the book up. A book that would go down in literary history as the one that really threw light on the twenties, on the forces, that is, that gave the life and art of the twenties their form. The force behind Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Lawrence, behind Lou Baker, Proctor, and even Dickie, and behind—perhaps a little far behind—Peter Foley himself. The flickering rites of spring that sputtered in Foley but burned with a gemlike flame in Lawrence. The buttered Danish on his lips, Foley paused, murmured:

"Young men are a corn dance, a rite of spring, and every generation must write its own music, and if these notes have a sequence the age has a style."

Who said that?

Peter Nielson Foley.

Where could it be found?

Near top of last, or next to last, page of manuscript now lying in grate of his fireplace, unpublished, unfinished, and tentatively titled "The Strange Captivity."

Above statement led up to the following:

The great style, the habit of perfection, united

George Herman Ruth and Charles A. Lindbergh, Albie Booth and Jack Dempsey, Juan Belmonte and Jay Gatsby, and every man, anywhere, who stood alone with his own symbolic bull. He had his gesture, his moment of truth, or his early death in the afternoon.

Foley his own matador. The graduate seminar his arena. The yellow pages in the fireplace his moment of truth.

Into his Schrafft's paper napkin, folded, he blew his nose. He stuffed the napkin into his cup, placed a dime on the counter, and as his right hand fumbled for the bill his left hand snatched five more sugar cubes from the bowl beside his water glass. Easy did it. Dropped cubes into left-hand pocket of his jacket as he asked cashier for paper matches. Outside, in the basket near curbing, he tossed celophane wrapper of his second panatella on the face of J. Lasky Proctor, smiling up at him. *Times* photo. Deeply eroded profile, dialectical gaze. An elderly man, in torn seersucker jacket, casual as a dog passing fire hydrant, reached into trash bin and swished paper from beneath his gaze. Folded it neatly, like train conductor, and slipped it into his pocket for later perusal. Clock at the front of the station read 10.49. Foley turned, without lighting his cigar, and walked to the north.

On Fifth Avenue, near Lord & Taylor, spirit of the city of New York touched Foley, and he walked against the windstream of oncoming traffic with long strides. Sky soft cobalt blue through filter of traffic gas, slight smarting of the eyes. Often walked into people, friends and enemies, hadn't seen for years. Girl from Vienna, big, strong kid with piano legs, cornhusker's hands, callused from pulling the weights and the parallel bars; hadn't seen her since the days of his exchange conversations at the Studenten Klub, on Schottengasse. One day *Colonel* Lundgren—high on a double-decker bus, wearing transparent raincoat over his chest of medals, firm, set expression of man who was beaten but would not give up. Cropped, sunburned hair,

pocked, windburned face, with fingers of brown hand drumming on lid of his hat. Another day Jill Rote, girl at Phipps, who had dated Proctor but talked about Lawrence, name on masthead of *Life*, hoped that he was doing something interesting. She meant also. Air of Girl Scout leader with ink-stained finger on pulse of the world. Every day some Tom Buchanan, modern version, man whose last big moment had been in the backfield, shoulders hunched from invisible goalposts he had never put down.

One's own kind. Other animals strangely invisible. According to Lou Baker, world was an ark with all the animals on their proper levels, and these were the specimens, naturally, that one met. Any day now, soon, the youngsters he had spoon-fed the culture-pabulum. See in their eyes, stronger than their own shame, pity for Foley and his unpublished future.

Very thought of that made him pull into a lobby, stare at the ranks of shoes. Hand-crafted, hand-boned, hand-oiled and polished, urban-suburban casuals, masculine loafers, for indoor-outdoor athlete who did not read the seed catalogues. Bench-made by old cobbler in mural-size photo, flashbulb shining on his mussy white hair, honest sweat on his forehead from honest toil, tight-lipped smile due to nails in his mouth, and frank, folksy glint in his steel-rimmed eyes, old Yankee stock, sleeves rolled on white arms showing sailing ship, a clipper, leaving ever-snug harbour, thumbnail black on hand holding leather laces, craft-soiled apron with two pockets for nails, loops and hooks for tools of his craft, but on his own tired, arch-cracked feet machine-made shoes, made very poorly, with hand-crafted egg-shaped hole to exhibit home-grown corn.

Attached to photograph blown-up statement from Paid Advertisement in *Life*. Foley tipped forward, as if bidden by guide, to note eight cardinal points of bench-made shoe. Sacred-profane power of printed word. Thou shalt not kill nor live through the winter without enriched bread, homogenized milk, and new scientific filter that took out of smoking everything but the cost. Through shoe-store

window, looking north, Foley saw Allen Blake, hatless and hope-borne, crossing street against light with his hand on the shoulder of up-and-coming author featured in last week's *Sunday Times*. Flight. He went out side entrance, back from where he had come.

Walked south on Sixth Avenue to Fortieth Street, headed back toward Fifth. Morning sun was warm and pleasant on freshly sand-blasted front of the library and on walnut-stained head of old man with a white beard. Venerable, high-domed, bum and sage, cane crossed on lap, right leg crossed on left, brown cotton sock showing through hole in sole of the shoe. Out of cradle endlessly rocking, comradely and phoney sage of the open road. Pigeon feeder and urban conscience of passing captains of industry, wondering what he knew, wondering what he read, wondering, by God, if the old fool was right. Old man's flabby body tolerably nourished by Salvation Army and Sisters of Mercy, but his soul powerfully sustained by envious, troubled glances of passers-by. Age could not wither nor custom stale time-honoured mask of venerable senility. Bearded saints over curtain in high-school auditorium, hail! Longfellow, Whittier, Smith Brothers Cough Drops, and Father Time, all hail! Take that story of Lou Baker, a child in Billings, Montana, taken by mother to Salt Lake City, where she saw, near Mormon Tabernacle, old man with long beard.

"Mother, there's God!" she cried. And no joke. Any old white beard, in rags, meditating, is where He sits. Eye of heavenly needle has leakproof valve to keep out beardless giants like Hearst and Baruch.

Patriarchs, circuit riders, wagon trains headed westward, tablets of the Law broken and unbroken, Founding Fathers, Old Granddad, Socrates and Moses, lice-ridden old men with thatches of white hair, socks that do not match, bird-dappled shoulders, hair growing from ears like Old Saint Stieglitz, all procreant spiritual heirs of Ouspensky, Blavatsky, and Mary Baker Eddy, Kahlil Gibran and the United Nations, deductible but ineluctable modality of the visible.



Coldness of the stone where he sat made Foley think of piles. He arose. Had been warned by his mother *not* to sit on curbing, never doubted its truth. He watched a south-bound bus, panting at the curb, take on a boy and girl in for a day in the city. The boy's flannel trousers wrinkled from the long morning ride with the girl in his lap. While the boy paid the fare the girl went to upper deck and took a seat at the front, hat in her lap, hair blowing, plain face and brown freckled arms. As boy dropped into the seat at her side he slipped an arm along the back of it. Plain freckled face, but not in his eyes, and no matter that her lips were chapped when he kissed her.

No matter? No, not in such eyes. It was Peter Foley who had laid down the law for it. Known as Foley's Mystical Law. When the world went up in smoke, the smoke would have this peculiar property. It would not, because of such eyes, be what it seemed. According to Foley's Law, what had been loved or created would be part of it.

He had told them. He had told them when they asked for it. They had asked the usual question, and, gazing at their pleasant, vacant faces, he had told them that nothing of any importance was decided by a vote. A judgment. On their goddam majority attitude. Their eyes had bugged, baiting him, and one had said, wasn't it by a vote that works of art were judged? Wasn't it by a vote of informed opinion that they were kept alive? Foley had taken out his father's watch, gazed at its face. They waited. They knew that he would now make a fool of himself. Then, in a luminous calm, he had told them that one hundred million votes, or five hundred million votes, or a solid vote of all the voters in the world, would not change, by a comma, the nature of a work of art. One man alone, the artist, determined that. Whether it was good or bad, mortal or immortal, was up to him. Artists, not votes, were responsible for works of art.

That was all very well, one had replied, that was all very well in the world of art, but what about the world in which they lived? What if the voters decided to burn all

these immortal works? As they had in the past. As they well might decide again.

Foley had been aware that a froth had formed on his dry lips. Like a madman. Very likely how he had looked. Like a madman, nothing would shut him up. Once a work of art existed, he had told them, once it had been imagined, truly created, it was beyond the reach of vandalism. *They* were not, *he* was not, the uncreated world itself was not, but what had been hammered out on the forge of art could be hammered to pieces, burned, bombed, or ignored, but it could not be destroyed. The outward form could be shattered, become smoke and ashes, but the inward form was radio-active, and the act of disappearance was the transformation of the dark into the light. Metamorphosis. The divine power of art. So it was meaningless for them to talk, as they did, of the lost plays of this man or that, because whatever art had touched, and made quick, was never truly lost. In the order that mattered, *their* order, they were there with those that had survived. Out of their reach, but not out of their lives. When the world went up in smoke, as everyone predicted, the creations of the human imagination would be in that smoke and give it a peculiar property. Light. Bomb-strewn seeds of immortality.

Foley looked up to see the light change, the bus jerk forward, the girl rock to the east, the boy to the west, as if something had suddenly gone wrong with gravity. The girl's brown hair swept the boy's flushed face, and he pointed, with a wagging finger, at the old fool seated on the bench in front of the library. Sun gleaming on the book lying open in his lap, shimmering halo of white hair. Struck the boy as funny, the girl as sad. A swirl of traffic gas and wind combed her hair over her face, and the boy tipped her head back, as if he would kiss her, and her eyes were closed, her lips parted—but no—no, not yet, and with her head resting on his arm she opened her eyes and saw his finger pointing at the Empire State.

## THE CAPTIVITY: V

The day after Thanksgiving we had a blow with a sleet-like rain that slapped on the windows, and when the sky cleared there was snow on the mountains to the north. All the freshmen on the campus who had never seen snow took the day off. But it was gone before they got up to it, unless they drove all the way to Baldy, where the Cucamonga range cast a shadow that kept the sun off the slopes. We had all seen snow, in our suite, and smiled with good humour at those who hadn't, or who had seen it but couldn't wait to get their hands in it.

As a matter of fact, the snow looked different up there on the mountains than it did in Chicago, and some of those who knew snow went along just to check up on it. In the afternoon it got hot, we all took sunbaths on the football field, and watched the snow line on the mountains edge up toward the top. With Lawrence's glasses, which Proctor had borrowed, we could see the dark spots where the snow had melted and the steam, rising like smoke, where the rocks were hot. We didn't see any freshmen, but we saw some wheel tracks along the ice-house road.

I was taking a shower back in the dorm when the phone rang. When I answered, the voice asked for me. Would I be able to stop by the dean's office immediately? I said yes, I would, then stood in my room, facing the window, wondering which mid-semester exam I had failed. On my way over to the dean's office I tried to think of the best way, if there was a best way, to let my mother in on the bad news.

The dean had two doors to his office, one at the front where he let you in and one at the back, a sort of arbour, where he let you out. Nobody going in wanted to face those coming out. He came to the door himself and asked

me in. The dean was a short, businesslike man, with nearly white hair at the temples, but so black on top the story went around that he wore a wig. He was very kind, asked me about Chicago, said how much he had personally liked my father, and how pleased they all were that I was preparing to take his place. Then he took off his glasses and placed his fingers on the bruised bridge of his nose. He was obliged, he said, to take me into his confidence. He didn't at all like to do this, it placed a great strain on the incoming student, but in the circumstances he felt it was unavoidable. He would have to pledge me, of course, to the utmost secrecy.

He looked to see if I agreed to that, then said that he had selected me, rather than my other room-mates, because my record, so far, was impeccable. All of my teachers had spoken of this fact. But one of my room-mates, unhappily, seemed to be having considerable trouble, which was probably due to the newness of college life.

The dean stopped there, and I waited for him to mention Proctor's name. I had often wondered when he found the time to do his work. He never missed a dance, and he washed dishes four hours a day. It was a very serious matter, the dean continued. Charles Lawrence came from a distinguished family, and it was well known that he had a very unusual mind. But he seemed to find it hard to put it to work. There was tennis, of course, but it seemed to be more than that. There was also the fact that Raymond Gans, an uncle of Charles, was a trustee of the college and personally responsible for the sprinkler system and the night lights around the football field. The problem needed to be handled, the dean said, with a great deal of tact.

"Just what is the problem, Mr. Nichols?" I said.

The dean opened his desk drawer, took out several theme papers, and passed me the one on top. The sheet was folded in the regulation manner, with Lawrence's name on the outside. On the inside there were two or three lines at the top of the page. The topic was :

## REGARDS BERTRAND RUSSELL

and said :

The works of Bertrand Russell give nice expression to lucid, forward-looking, remarkably shallow mind.

That was all.

"Does it sound like him?" said the dean.

"Not particularly."

"That seems to be our problem," said the dean.

I read the statement over, then I looked through the window of the dean's study at the freshmen dormitory, the blind drawn at the window of Lawrence's room. Behind the blind sat his desk, his onyx pen-and-pencil set, his sea-horse in the heavy paperweight, and the photograph of Dickie leering over the shoulder of the nude on his lap. It sounded like Dickie. I knew that without knowing how he would sound.

"The English papers are quite brilliant, but different," said the dean. "They seem to be concerned with his boyhood in Brooklyn. Remarkably well done"—he waved one in the air—"but—"

"You don't think he grew up in Brooklyn?" I said.

"There is no mention of it in the transcript."

"Lawrence has lived all over the world, Mr. Nichols, and he may have got to know somebody from Brooklyn."

"I'm glad to have you presenting the other side of it, Peter," the dean said.

"I know that Lawrence has had a very broad background, Mr. Nichols."

"We are anxious to do what we can, Peter, but we feel that we need something more to go on." He waved his hand at the paper I was holding.

"Lawrence is not an easy man to figure out," I said.

"We were wondering if you found that true," said the dean, and I thought he looked relieved. He reached for the paper I was holding, read the statement over, placed it with the others. "A brilliant mind, Peter," he said, "but

extremely unorthodox."

"I'll see what I can do," I said.

"In strictest confidence, Peter, I'm afraid Lawrence intimidates Miss Loucheim. She doesn't feel that she's equipped to deal with him. We all feel that one of his friends, one mature enough to understand the situation—" The buzzer under the dean's desk sounded, and he stood up. "As soon as things quiet down a little, Peter," he said, "Mrs. Nichols and I plan to have you over. Mrs. Nichols knew your father. You are here for the holidays?"

I said that I was. Going back to Chicago, I said, was too great an expense. The dean said he thought I was very wise to look at it so sensibly, not to mention the free, undistracted time it would give me to work. He placed his hand on my shoulder as I went out the door. I went back across the campus and around behind the dorm to the football field. Four or five cross-country men were jogging around the track. I took a seat in the grandstand on the south side, facing the foothills and the mountains, the snow gone now except for the cap on Baldy's peak. The bright whiteness of the peak made the sky seem colourless. The foothills were nearly purple in the slanting light, spring green in spots from the heavy rain, and the shadows moved on the slopes like the hands of a clock. I sat there until I heard the supper bell ring in the dorm.

On the way to the mess hall I met Lawrence, walking along with his hands in his pockets, the chewed-off ends of his untied laces slapping on the walk. I waited for him to catch up, then we walked along together, under the new trees in the olive court, to where he opened the door to the mess hall and said, "After you, old man."

The next morning, following breakfast, I had to come back to the rooms for my books, and I was on my way out when Proctor came up the stairs. He came all the way up two at a time, and there was sweat on his face.

I waited till he got his wind, then he said, "This something I wouldn't tell anybody."

"Then why tell me?"

"I got to tell somebody."

"Which arm is it this time?" I said.

"He's takin' me with him," he said.

"With him?"

"Home for the holidays, old man. Home for Christmas. He's asked me to go along."

He watched my face to see how I was taking that. In his own face I could see that he didn't know how to take it. He wanted to know. He watched me for a cue.

"That ought to be mighty nice," I said.

"You think it's all right, old man?"

"I don't know why not."

He knew why not and said, "If his family didn't like Jews, would he ask me?"

"Of course not," I said.

"You really think so, old man?"

"Just so long as he asked you," I said.

"Christ's sake, old man, you think I'd ask him?"

I didn't answer.

"He asked me what I had in mind over Christmas, and I said I didn't have anything in mind. I didn't. So he asked me how I'd like to come home with him. I said, 'Lawrence, stop kiddin'.' He said, 'I'm serious, old man.' I said, 'Look, where is it?' 'Back in southern Indiana, old man.' 'And how do we get there?' I said. 'I drive it in about three days, old man.' Then he said, 'Well—' so I naturally said yes."

"Well, that's that," I said.

"I can't believe it," Proctor said.

"They probably have a very nice place," I said.

"You think I'm just a crazy bastard, old man?"

"I'd have gone if he'd asked me," I said.

"Why don't I put it to him?" he said. "Why the hell not? More the merrier."

"I've been asked to meet the dean and his wife," I said. "Guess the dean knew my father. They've asked me to drop in on them during the holidays."

"That ought to be pretty nice too," said Proctor.

I agreed.

Then he said, "Foley, old man—"

"What's on your mind?"

"If you're going to be stickin' around," he said, "if you don't think you'll need that second pair of pants—"

"I'm pretty sure I won't," I said and went back to the door of my closet. I took the new pair off of the hanger, the pair I'd never worn, and tossed them to him. "I still got a pair," I said. "What the hell I need with two pair?"

"I tell you what we do," said Proctor, "we'll swap. You loan me the pants, I loan you my typewriter."

"I don't typewrite much," I said.

"Now's your chance to learn, old man," he said. "You got three weeks. You got three weeks to practise." He went off with my pants, came back with his typewriter. "The ribbon may be a little old," he said and opened the lid, peered at the ribbon. The bottom half was so chewed you could see the yellow sheet on the roller through it.

"I probably won't get around to it," I said, "but if I do I'll pick up a ribbon."

"I got to run," he said, ran, then stopped and said, "Keep it under the bed or somewhere, old man, would you?" I said that I would. Then I heard him go down the stairs, about four at a time, and out the front door.

I had my Phys. Ed. class in the afternoon, and on my way to the gym I passed Lundgren on his way to the field with his track shoes and vaulting pole. He was wearing his Long Beach High sweat pants and eating a Sportsman's Chocolate Bracer.

"Well, son," he said to me, "think you can bear up?"

"Under what?"

"Proctor's leaving us, baby. He's got a moral obligation. He's got a feeling that Lawrence needs him at Christmas. He feels that you an' me might make it alone, but Lawrence is a lonely cuss."

"He told you this?" I said.

"No, baby—just everybody else on the campus." He balanced the pole in his hand, tossed off the candy wrapper. "Lawrence ever mention any sisters?" he said.



I didn't answer.

"How you think it sounds better, baby," he said, "Lawrence and Proctor, or Proctor and Lawrence? Proctor and Lawrence sounds more natural, don't you think?"

I didn't know what to think, and in the spell-down drill with the Indian clubs I dropped out very early, which was not like me, and sat on the mats near the door from where I could see the snow cap on Baldy and the legs of Lundgren when he came down the runway and rose into the air. There was something on his mind, too, for he dropped out around ten feet.

Proctor and Lawrence got off after dinner on Wednesday night. That was a day early, strictly speaking, but they had about two thousand miles to drive, and by leaving at night they would cross the desert while it was cool. Driving day and night they would be in Indiana on the third day. A freshman named Crowell went along as far as Tulsa, and Proctor, to occupy his mind when he wasn't at the wheel, took along his copy of *The Story of Philosophy*.

Lundgren and I had one meal a day at the Sugar Bowl. On the way back to the dorm we would come up through the campus orange trees. The new crop of Valencias were dropping on the ground, and if they hadn't dropped, they would with a little shaking. We ate a couple of dozen a day between us, and we both had a touch of the hives. Lundgren had it worse because there was wool in his socks and his army uniform.

We had the place to ourselves, but it took time to grow on us. During the day we might hear some of the maids mopping up the showers or the hallways, or the suction wheeze of the pump that was cleaning out the swimming pool. At night we'd hear the whine of the traffic on Foot-hill, and later, on the foggy mornings, the honking of the big electric cars.

Christmas Eve, Lundgren offered me one of his cigarettes. He had opened a fresh pack of Luckies and held it out toward me.

I took one, put it between my lips, and said, "What do you do?"

"Light it and suck on it like a titty," he said.

After Luckies I tried Melachrinos, for the flags that came in the box. To start the New Year I bought a pipe and a four-ounce tin of Three Nuns tobacco, and Lundgren bought a sack of Bull Durham, to roll his own.

I read all the books on my spring assignment, then I started on the books on Proctor's desk, but he had them pretty badly marked up and underlined. *This Side of Paradise* had pages I couldn't make out. Whenever Amory Blaine made a clever remark it was underlined. If Proctor had found it clever the second time around he had underlined it again. I recognized quite a few remarks he had made himself. His favourite word seemed to be "touché," which he put in the margins of all the pages, usually followed by a row of exclamation marks. At the top or the bottom he would jot down what he thought of the characters.

I finished *Peter Whiffle* on New Year's Eve, and I was still in bed, mulling it over, when Lundgren asked me how about a little hike. What he had in mind was getting up in the foothills, he said. Up there we would have a fine view of the valley, the signs of the zodiac, and any meteor shower, shooting stars, or comets that might turn up. We took along tobacco, hotdogs, coffee, and a supply of Sportsman's Bracers.

We got up to what they called the Summer House just before sundown. The house was gone, burned off in a grass fire, but the concrete foundation was still there, and the fireplace that had been at the east end of the club room. We watched the shadows, like an ebb tide, slowly cover everything in the valley, till there was nothing but the broomlike tops of the palms sticking out. Then they went under, the hills went under, and we sat with our backs to the fire, eating hotdogs and smoking our own brand of cigarettes.

Lundgren pointed out the planets, the constellations, the

narrow band of the sky that the planets whirled in, and indicated about where the two of us were in the shape of it. I could see that talking did him good. In the glow from the fire it even seemed to me he had a good face. I wasn't struck by the pockmarks that covered it. I wondered how long it would take a girl, one of the smart girls at Phipps, to look at Lundgren, as I did, and see only his fine points—his good teeth, his sky-blue eyes, the way he could slouch like Gary Cooper—without troubling to notice that his complexion was not so good. I had reached that point myself. I could be with Lundgren without keeping my eyes off him. I wondered if Proctor, spending Christmas with Lawrence, would forget that Lawrence's right arm was overdeveloped, or if that was why Lawrence had taken Proctor home with him. To get used to it. To feel that Proctor had stopped seeing it. So he could be with Proctor the way I could be with Lundgren, sit and listen to him talk, watch him roll his cigarettes, without thinking what a shame it was that he had such a pockmarked face. And as for himself, he might forget to notice that Proctor was a Jew.

I let him finish with the sky, then I said, "Why are you so down on Proctor, old man?"

"Et tu?" he said.

"Et tu what?" I said.

"This *old man* crap, baby."

"I don't see a hell of a lot of difference," I said, "between the *old man* crap and baby." I think that hurt him. Besides, I didn't often swear. When I swore it may have sounded stronger than I meant. "I know he looks pretty bad," I said, "but he's not so bad as he looks."

"Maybe I just don't like him," Lundgren said.

"I happen to know," I said, "that he's doing a lot for Lawrence."

"We supposed to be doing something for Lawrence?"

"I didn't mean it like that," I said.

"Suppose we skip it."

"I happen to know," I said, "that Proctor is doing some of his papers."

He let some of the tobacco he was holding in the paper spill into his lap. "I'll be a sonuvabitch," he said.

"This is between you and me," I said, 'and besides, I don't think it means much to Lawrence. It isn't like cheating. It's like Proctor's picking up his tennis balls."

"Jesus!" Lundgren said, and I could see that it made an impression on him. He rubbed his arms and legs as if he suddenly felt cold, and pulled me up. We kicked some loose dirt on the fire, wet it down a little with the last of the coffee, then made our way back in the tracks we had made coming up. On Foothill Boulevard the traffic was heavy, with snow on the cars returning from the mountains, and a car with chains had stopped along the road to take them off. They had a radio with them, and Guy Lombardo was playing one of Proctor's favourite numbers.

" 'A cup of coffee, a sandwich, and you, baby.' " Lundgren said and whistled it.

Proctor and Lawrence pulled in about sunrise that same night. We saw Lawrence right away, but not Proctor. He had shot a hole in his left foot with a big Colt revolver that he had been holding between his knees. He had been shooting at the rabbits that popped up and ran between the lights. That had been near Needles. Lawrence had driven it in two hours and a half. The hole went right through Proctor's foot, his rubber-soled buck shoes, and then through the floorboard. Lawrence had driven to the infirmary and carried him in. Then he had driven into town with the Colt revolver and reported the accident to the police, who called me up at the dorm—he gave my name as reference. They held him till it seemed reasonably certain that Proctor had shot himself, and not been shot by Lawrence, then they fined him for possessing an illegal weapon and turned him loose. Lundgren and I drove over and picked him up.

In the mail that morning we got the postcard that Proctor had dropped in the box at El Paso, showing a giant grasshopper and saying that they were having a hell of a time.

## FOLEY: 5

Escorted by a coach-and-four advertising chocolates, Foley crossed to the shady side of the street, left arm brushing elbow of a woman in cloud of 'light-scented stock. Lou Baker's fragrance. Foley knew it well. Young man on her other elbow in charcoal flannels, patent-leather oxfords, chap at corners of his mouth, expression of comedian paid not to smile. Fayum portrait gaze of living on far side of the grave. Hand cupped to her elbow, wheeling her slowly, like Seeing-Eye dog. Walked her briskly, confidently, into air-cooled draught, along corridor between windows of cut flowers, inspirational pamphlets, and latest flood of how-to-do-it books. *How to Stop Smoking* on top. "How to Stop Letching" next big thing. At front of window, beneath advertising clipping, what looked like a compass, individually boxed. Foley stooped to read:

### RECORDING ROSARY

*Work & Pray*

\$2. P.paid.

(Auto clamp extra)

KEEPS TABS ON MYSTERY

*Arrow points to bead to be prayed.*

Car

Pocket or

Purse!

FATIMA ROSARY

Foley straightened with a sigh, loosened topcoat button, walked away. Going north on Madison, left the curb and walked in the street. Stopped at lights, avoided fireplugs, made way for those who saw less than he did, without actually seeing the things he passed. Operating on his

electric eye. Like passing cab drivers with their eye on the ballgame at Ebbetts Field.

At Fifty-ninth, turning west, he could see the green gap over the park. A policeman mounted on a horse, a child with spindly legs holding up shreds of grass to the policeman's horse. Also balloons, a bright cluster, that seemed to suspend the pedlar above the street and beyond the balloons. Three horse-drawn cabs lined up at the curb. Helping a young woman into first of the cabs was tall greying man with more courage than Foley. About Foley's age. Old enough to know what he was doing, that is. Courage to rent a horse-drawn cab and take young woman for a spin in the park. Proctor had taken Lou Baker. Lawrence had ridden down the avenue by himself.

Once in his life Foley might have done it. Spring he had signed the contract for his book. Had advance royalties cheque in his pocket, rain-making impulse in his heart. In the doughnut shop on the corner he had called up Lou Baker, the corn-dance maiden, but the phone had not answered, and his coin had dropped, clinking, into the slot. Foley had sat there in the phone booth watching other gallants go for the ride. Lacked the guts, as it turned out, to go it alone. Lacked the know-how, as it turned out, to make rain in the book.

Nearing the middle of the block, he stepped into stale draught full of music. Fugue from Franck "Prélude, Choral and Fugue," blowing from bookstore stacked with remainders. But softly. Soothing savage breast for possible sales. Walls hung with modern conversation pieces, air full of transcribed classical pollen. Culture by pollination. Painless. Dehydrated or sanforized. As he dawdled between counters to the back, caught sight of *Hound and Horn*. Single copy. Lou Baker, for a year or two, had worked on the staff. Published excerpt tautly titled "Disinherited." Now dated. What did he mean, *dated*? Sense of having been —*having been taken in*. Price on magazine forty-nine cents, so he slipped it under several books on the counter, where he might find it if he changed his mind on way back.

Turned to see clerk with saddle-leather tie pin eyeing him. Button-down, too tight collar dating from odds and ends sale at De Pinna's.

"Getting warm," Foley said and took out a Schrafft's napkin, wiped his face. Clerk knew that. Wearing Mexican ring hand-crafted in the Village, and in spite of the heat cable-stitched pullover sweater. Living in windowless room where he let tap drip over wilted head of lettuce in bowl in the bathtub. Argyle socks drying on the faucet handles. Two liqueur glasses from sale at Plummer's. As Foley idled toward the front, clerk cruised around the counter to the back. Foley watched him tilt over, shift pile of books, find copy of magazine he had left there, and thumb through rapidly for erotic illustrations he had missed. Returned magazine to centre of table, under Toulouse-Lautrec. Take it home with him later, go over it carefully. Foley stepped outside, turned as if name was called, but voice came from cab waiting at the curbing, Yankee Stadium. Batteries for the afternoon game. In background Foley could hear sound of foul ball slapping on screen of pressbox. Cab driver, noting he was listening, flipped up the flag on his meter, slowly drifted away.

When Foley talked about the good life in the city he didn't mean the city, he meant Central Park, and all he wanted of the park was a narrow green gap he could view from the window of a grey stone mansion. Below the window small trees, like celery stalks, wearing collars of garden hose and leashes of wire, as if taken in at night but curbed in the morning, like a good dog. Shaded street would be wet, with moist scent of early morning watering. Parked at the curb would be a wagon-wheeled electric, with flowers in the vases screwed to the doorposts, or an old Pierce-Arrow with the popeyed look of the fender lights. A chauffeur brightening up the brass with a cloth that smelled like an O-Cedar mop.

*Foley's Fossil Diorama.* Property of Peter Foley, born 1909: died 1929: corpse planted on the campus of quiet Quaker college, where it did not sprout. Spirit known to

hover over scene of diorama, whimpering at night. Gatsby's dream, Proctor's trauma, like peignoir thrown to Foley as he soaked in the tub at St. Cloud, the night after Lawrence's death. Smelling strongly of girls, of the bags of sachet found in all the drawers of the guest rooms, smelling of caste, class, and coats of arms, Yardley soap, saddle-leather luggage, and the pollen-laden air over the olive court at Phipps. Lawrence laundry tag sewed on to the tail of it. Foley had slipped it on, easy enough, but couldn't slip it off. Had left it on, worn it wet and smelling, tails gathered in a bulging wad around his middle, under the linen coat and the pongee shirt all the way across Paris to his room. Swiped it, that is, in the American manner, like a piece of the Cross, Lincoln's axe or log cabin, or pocket said to be torn from Babe Ruth's pants. An object of magic, a pollen seeder, a hollow gourd full of the stuff that when rattled made the corn flower, the ghosts dance, and the dragon's teeth sprout like the rites of spring.

As if a finger had tapped him on the shoulder, Foley turned. Thought he had heard, would have sworn he had heard, some word spoken. No one stood behind him, but a small child, wearing a reindeer harness, peered at him through the bars of a playground, as from a cage. Gazed into Foley's eyes as if they were holes bored into his head. Poor damn kid, he thought, and smiled. But child did not smile. For a moment he stood fixed, powerless to act, like a specimen pinned to the wall, until the child's nurse picked up reins of his harness and pulled him away. Calmly, casually, Foley glanced at his watch, still keeping his father's time, then he ran for bus held up by corner light.



## THE CAPTIVITY: VI

We had it nip and tuck with Proctor for four or five weeks. The shock was bad, and after the shock there was a run of blood poisoning, but that setback, as it turned out, may have saved his foot. They figured he was too weak at the time for them to amputate it. So he came through with his foot, but it would never run the quarter in fifty flat. The slug had smashed all the fine bones across the instep, and when they took the drain from the hole it looked as if he had been nailed to the cross.

That was the end of the great quarter-miler, and the new track shoes Lawrence had given him for Christmas hung by their laces at the foot of his bed like the small boxing gloves dangling on the windshields of taxicabs.

I had never seen him run without his sweat pants, or noticed him particularly in the shower, so I was surprised to see what beautiful legs he had. It made me wonder if a woman appreciated them. He had no arms to speak of, nor shoulders, but his legs were very nicely turned in the calves and like a good trotting horse where they met at the crotch. That explained why he made the racket he did when he wore corduroys. In a run much longer than the quarter mile he would need to be greased up between the thighs, like the well-bred horses I had seen in Chicago on the bridle paths.

When he was not so depressed he began to read and catch up on his work. He gave his papers to me or Lawrence to deliver, depending on the class. During the spell that he was sick, or depressed, I wrote the English and Civics papers for Lawrence—nothing was coming through from Princeton at that point that was fit to use. I wrote about Chicago more or less in the vein Proctor had written about Brooklyn, but much more acceptably, since it was

known that Lawrence had a Chicago background. I had a note from the dean congratulating me on the good work. Proctor and I never discussed it, but when it was clear that I was doing so well, Proctor suggested that maybe I should keep it up. His own papers might get us into trouble; they were too bright. He was writing poems now as well as stories, most of them dealing with love, all of them with sad endings, but none of them reminding you of Lawrence. My papers reminded the dean of Lawrence quite a bit. They indicated, he said, that Lawrence was becoming more aware of himself.

Proctor and I never discussed certain details, but we worked out a programme that would keep Lawrence in school. It called for handling some of Lawrence's mail. Every two or three weeks, as a rule, he would receive a big envelope from Princeton—he would, that is, unless Proctor or I headed it off. The envelope was full of papers Dickie Livingston had collected from his girls. They were usually from Vassar, Smith, or Barnard, but he also had a very smart number at Goucher, who would turn him out a fine paper to order, on anything. Lawrence would throw them into one of the bags under his bed. When he needed a paper he would take one out, retype the first page and put his name on it, then go through the paper making spelling corrections in his own green ink. It was a system of sorts but not very well worked out. It might have worked pretty well at USC., Illinois, or one of the big factories, but Colton was so small you couldn't get away with something like that. Proctor had seen that early in the fall, when he collected the mail. The only thing he could do was start writing the papers himself. Lawrence didn't seem to care where they came from, who wrote them, or even who saw through it. He left Vassar and Smith term papers in the seat of his car; they might turn up in the pocket of his coat, or anywhere. There had been nothing for Proctor to do but see that he didn't get more of them, and to do that he had to censor Lawrence's mail. That had not been hard, for Lawrence didn't seem to care about that

either.

While Proctor was in bed I had to take care of that myself. As a matter of precaution I went through his car, cleaning out all the stuff I found in the rumble and taking out the front seat to get at the papers that had fallen behind. There were plenty. Some of them dated from 1924. I went so far as to clear out the top drawer of his desk. He sometimes left a paper there after he had finished re-typing part of it. He didn't seem to give a damn. He had just forgotten that they were there. Except for French Survey, which he took up at Phipps, we had him pretty well organised by mid-February; a week or two, that is, before the freshmen took their physical exams. Right after the exams would come the first semester finals, which Lawrence would flunk, but his papers would be so good, we were sure, that he wouldn't fail the courses. So we had it all figured, we had it down as pat as you can have something like Lawrence, right up to the night that Lundgren tapped on the door of my room.

When I opened it he said, "Baby, how about you and me taking a little walk?"

I figured that some griped, pimply-chinned freshman had let the cat out of the bag. He had probably been smart and waited till he knew he had us all involved. That's what I was thinking, and as we headed for the wash, a sort of necking preserve behind the football field, I was trying to decide if I should write and break the story to my mother first. We poked along through the dark till we came to the Greek Theatre. We came out on the stage, facing the curve of seats, and there was just moonlight enough to see the pairs of upperclass neckers, high at the back, under the blue and white Colton laprobes. Where we stood on the stage, just left of centre, there were two rustic tables and several benches, left over from the Glee Club's holiday performance of *Robin Hood*. Lundgren dragged a bench up to one of the tables, and we sat down on it. He put his Bull Durham sack on the table, his papers, and about two-thirds of a Sportsman's Bracer he had started on the way over but

decided to save. I've often wondered what the upperclass spooners thought of us. The moon was rising, and in the cold white light I couldn't see much of Lundgren's face but the blond top of his head and the white sweater he was wearing were very bright. In a clear voice he said that he had brought me out there to tell me the truth. I could hear the planks creak under the lovers who sat up to catch an earful of it.

He had been sitting in his room, playing with his magnet, when he turned and saw Lawrence standing in the door. Lawrence hadn't knocked, or spoken up, but just stood there with his right hand poised on hip.

"What's on your mind, Lawrence?" Lundgren had said. For certain reasons he never called him "baby." He admired Lawrence, but he reserved "baby" for people he liked.

"I'm in a bit of a jam, old man," Lawrence had said.

Lundgren said that he knew that so well he had agreed with it. He had nodded his head, and Lawrence had stepped into his room.

"I can't take it, old man."

Lundgren had naturally thought he meant the pace. In particular, the final exams that were coming up. "Oh, I don't know," he had said. "Aren't you in the upper bracket?"

"I mean the physical. I can't take it."

"The phys—" Lundgren had replied. "Why not?"

"Old man," Lawrence had said, putting his hand into his pocket, "I'll have to take you into my confidence."

Lundgren had just sat there, and Lawrence had gazed at the wall where Lundgren had drawn a target on the plaster. There were small holes in the plaster where Lundgren had stuck his compass, then drawn it out.

"What's the trouble?" he had said.

"Old man," Lawrence had said, "I got a dose of the clap."

"Christ!" Lundgren had jumped out of his chair as if Lawrence was so sick he might need it. But Lawrence didn't need it, so he had sat down again.

"Nothing urgent," Lawrence had said. "Responding to treatment. Got a little careless in the Latin Quarter. Well under control, but there's still a little scar tissue."

"Christ almighty!"

"But I'm afraid an examination, old man—" he had said, and Lundgren had said, "Good God no, baby!" He had felt friendly toward Lawrence the moment he admitted to something like that. Lawrence had gone on to say that he didn't tell Proctor because he was young and it might sort of shock him, and he didn't tell me because he wasn't sure I was the type. But he thought Lundgren was more acquainted with the facts of life and was not the sort of man who would get excited when he heard the word clap. Lundgren had replied that he knew there were people with so little experience that they *did* get excited, but thank God *he* didn't, and then he asked Lawrence what he intended to do.

"I was thinking of shooting myself," Lawrence had replied.

The way he said it had made Lundgren's blood run cold. He had probably looked it, for Lawrence had gone on, "Not seriously, old man, just a small wound that would put me on the sick list for a short time." Then he had put his left hand into the air and said, "I hardly use this hand."

"Look!" Lundgren had said, but it had been some time before he could speak. First of all, what the hell could he say? Finally he had cooled down and said that two accidental shootings in the same freshmen suite might lead some people to wonder what the hell. They might think everybody in the suite was crazy, or something like that.

"I can see your point, old man," Lawrence had said, but he had just stood there looking down at his feet, in particular the foot that Proctor had drilled with the .45. Lundgren said it had given him the willies just to look at him.

"Look, baby," he had said, "suppose we think it over?" And Lawrence had said, much obliged, old man, just as if Lundgren had been the one with the clap and had to make up his mind. It had been too much of a problem for Lund-

gren to keep to himself. The more he had thought about it the less he knew what the hell to think.

"Christ made little apples," I said, to indicate what I thought about it, then I sat there and watched Lundgren roll a cigarette. It took him quite some time; his hands were so nervous the tobacco spilled.

"The crazy goddam booby-drawers, baby!" he said, and I could see that he was nearly overcome with admiration. He never cursed out anything he didn't admire a lot. He had something like a feeling of reverence for a man who could catch the clap "The crazy sieve-brained romantic bastard!" he said in a voice you could have heard back on the campus. "He probably caught it from one of them goddam French whores!"

From the edge of the stage he flipped his cigarette into the dark side of the pit, turned on his heel and walked back into the wash, with me following him. There was not a peep, not a sound, from the lovers we left in the stands. It didn't seem at all strange, out there in the moonlight, that a man who played tennis without any ground strokes should naturally catch the clap, or something worse, from the Latin Quarter whores. It was just one of the chances that a man of that type would take. We walked back through the wash without any more talk, coming in from the back, across the football field, from where we could see the lights that were burning in the freshmen dorms. But Lawrence, clap and all, had gone to bed. There was no light in his window, and it crossed my mind, as we went up the stairs, that now every one of us had something on Lawrence, good or bad. But it was drawing us together right when I thought we were falling apart. Now he had the clap, or at least scar tissue, and while he slept we would lie awake, wondering where the hell he got it and what it was like. He didn't seem to give a damn somehow, but we did.

"The hopeless goddam bastard," Lundgren said, but no more than a whisper, under his breath, because we could see the door to the room he slept in was ajar. We undressed

and went to bed without turning on the lights.

On Washington's birthday, two days later, Lawrence disappeared. He got up from his desk, early in the evening, and I heard him speak to Lundgren, and Lundgren asked him if he would mind bringing back some hamburgers from Ma Slade's. He said he would, and we sat up waiting for them, but he didn't come back. When we got up in the morning we saw his unslept-in bed. He didn't show up all that day, so Lundgren called up the dean in the evening, pointing out the fact that Lawrence's car was gone and he was not in his room. The dean asked to speak to me, and I said that Lawrence had been feeling a little pressure, like everybody else, with the final exams coming up. That was all until Sunday evening, when an orange grower, over in the next county, found Lawrence's car parked under one of his orange trees. Everything that would come off or unscrew had been taken off it. The cops even found the holes that Proctor had shot in the turned-back top. The next morning the freshmen physicals began, and in the evening papers there were pictures of Lawrence, with stories to the effect that he had probably been kidnapped. The police, however, said it looked like amnesia—they had stopped believing in kidnapping after Sister Aimee had *not* been kidnapped two years before. The Tuesday papers were full of more pictures, described the great wealth of the Lawrence family, and on Wednesday morning Mr. Raymond Gans, Lawrence's uncle, arrived on the campus. He brought along four or five Pinkerton men from Chicago. They spent one day picking up campus gossip, one day driving around and looking at the country, then they sat in our rooms playing pinochle and filing their reports. Mr. Gans called every hour from his room at the Ambassador in Los Angeles.

By Friday all the freshmen physicals were over, and early Saturday morning, according to the papers, a half-starved, dazed college student, nearly crazy from lack of water and food, stumbled out of the sagebrush about a mile outside of Twenty-nine Palms. It was Lawrence, and he was in all the papers that evening. We had him back at school Sun-

day morning—we had him in the infirmary, that is, occupying the room right across the hall from Proctor. According to the papers, he was suffering from shock, but I couldn't see much of a change in him myself. If you didn't know Lawrence very well you might call it shock.

The story was that a couple of sailors, after thumbing a ride from Lawrence, had hit him over the head with a tyre lever they found on the floor. Then they had taken his watch, his money, and stripped down the car. The only part of the story that made much sense was that he had been hit by a tyre lever, and around at the back, where he couldn't have hit himself. He had been hit so hard he may have been out cold several hours or more. Lundgren and I came to the conclusion that he hired some thug to hit him over the head, and that the thug thought he was crazy, and may have stripped down the car. But there were also quite a few holes in a story like that. When you were dealing with a person like Lawrence you couldn't draw a line around what might have happened, or say, as they did, that he couldn't have kayoed himself. Monday morning his uncle came out from L.A., and he was there in the infirmary when Dr. Lynes checked Lawrence's heart, his lungs, and the bump on the back of his head. Then he asked him to stand up and take the test for hernia. He took it all right, and the doctor gave him a clean bill of health.



## FOLEY: 6

As the bus crossed Fifty-seventh Street the driver, swollen with a sense of power, malice, and adventure, ran past three stops, clipping one red light, and the swaying of the bus produced in Foley same effect as early morning coffee on an empty stomach. This sensation followed by lowered centre of gravity in his bowels. About time. He had expected it earlier. Looked up at the familiar aspect of the street, suddenly transformed by the needs of the moment. Forty-ninth Street. Where would be nearest facilities? The great city of New York specialized in consumption but turned a prudish shoulder on evacuation. Streets of New York, unlike those of Paris, were not decorated with the pissoir kiosks, where the legs of men could be seen facing the facts of life.

Over the years—Foley rose from the seat, then braced himself at the hiss of the air-brakes—over the years he had given the problem considerable thought. The solution, a tentative solution, had come along with other relevant blessings when he became an author on a midtown publisher's list. Allen Blake's office was on the fourth floor, with the facilities right off the stairwell, so Foley could reach them without disturbing anyone. Girl at the desk, at the time, recognized him as one of "their authors." When this girl disappeared, and the one that took her place cast a cold and knowing eye on Foley, he had resorted to a clever subterfuge. He took the elevator to the fifth floor, where there was no phone girl to spy on him, then walked down the stairs to the Blake facilities. As time passed, however, his sense of guilt increased. What he always feared might happen had happened, naturally. He had walked right into Blake standing there smoking a cigarette. It would not have been so bad if he hadn't caught Blake just

standing there, like any office loafer, without the slightest suggestion of the literary life emanating from him. He looked played out. The shirt he was wearing had a tear in the back. It proved to be a faux pas, all around. Foley had to tell a big lie quickly, saying that he had stopped by on the chance that Blake might be in. So Blake had to lie, turning up with the whopper that he was there in the toilet brooding on a big problem, with the author in question waiting for an answer right at his desk. It had been so bad that Foley hadn't gone back for more than a year.

And then, as luck would have it, he had run into Blake washing his hands. Blake had seen him in the mirror, where Foley had seen Blake, and Foley had grimaced, as had Blake, then he had hurried on by and entered one of the booths.

As he had stepped inside he had heard Blake say, "In town for the day, Foley?"

"Yep," Foley had said, and that was all. It had been enough, as it turned out, and they each accepted the situation. The Foley in the toilet was no longer the author of an unpublished book. He was a professor, a tourist, trapped in the city for a day.

Passing Forty-ninth Street, Foley gave a sharp jerk on the cord. He wanted Forty-sixth, but the driver kept him on till Forty-fifth. There, because the light had changed, he let him off. Foley went across to Madison, where he paused to examine, in pipe-store window, imported English pipe knife in leather case. Reduced from three times its value to a little more than twice what it was worth. Foley had three pipe tools, but he had always wanted a knife.

As the light changed, walking east, found himself once more escorted by coach and four, hemmed in by big fellow with freshly powdered face, strong barber-shop smell. To companion Foley could not see he said, "Why the hell is *free* love the most expensive?" Foley moved in close to catch the answer, but none was made.

They went south on the opposite corner, Foley went north. In the tiled lobby of the publisher's building Foley

walked to the back, near side entrance to a bar, where he could duck in case Blake stepped out of the lift. He didn't, however, and Foley rode to the fifth, passed the offices of Tay-Koff, the miracle reducer, then padded down the stairs to the door that was blocked with a piece of wood. He stood a moment listening for sound of flushed toilet or crumpled paper towel. Hearing nothing, he entered, crossed the dim-lit room with his reflection bright in the mirror, and entered the booth beneath the ventilating fan. Latched the door, removed his two coats as one, hung them on the hook, and as he lowered to the stool thought he noticed spot move on the floor. Tobacco colour. Staring, saw it move again. Go along the wall to where he saw the feelers waving. Saw it was a roach.

La cucaracha, voracious, nocturnal, and, in spite of the insecticides, immortal. Foley watched it cruise along woodwork, confident as a dog out for an airing. But when it headed for the open, the no-man's land of cracked tile, he shooed it back. In God's name why? *J. Lasky Proctor, Salvage Operations*. Was that why? Dated from first cockroach Foley had ever known, personally. Chicago. Ludlow Terrace. Afternoon he had spent in Proctor's rented room. Foley had cut his hand on a metal ashtray, and Proctor had led him into the bathroom to rinse it off. Big room, small dirty sink in far corner, and Foley had sat on the stool, holding his hand under the water. Strong smell of chlorine and whiffs from coated piece of Lifebuoy soap. Bulb in ceiling as dim as glowworm trapped in a dirty glass. There were rings around the tub, like the banked turns on a track, but Proctor had his eye on something that was trapped there, something that moved. Foley watched him unroll several yards of toilet paper and lay down a ramp at the back of the tub, and the cockroach trapped in the tub ran up the paper ramp as if trained. It came up so fast that it nearly spilled over when it reached the top. Then it went around the wall side, skidding a little, because the game leg it had was dragging, and the room was so quiet Foley heard the drag of that leg. It went on to the soapdish,

climbed in and out, then went up the wall to the ledge directly above it, along this ledge to a deep crack in the plaster, where it disappeared. Proctor rolled up the toilet paper he had put down, placed it back on the roll.

"Proctor Salvage Operations," he had said. "One poor goddam cockroach salvaged."

Kith and kin, perhaps, of the one Foley had just shooed into the dark. Another cockroach saved, another un-American act. FOLEY UNMASKED. *Sides with Red Roach against Common Man*. Behind a cigarette butt, its barricade, the roach turned to check up on Foley, and Foley strained to catch the glint in its eye. As its feelers waved, Foley intoned :

"FOLEY AND PROCTOR SALVAGE OPERATIONS  
*Vermin a Speciality.*"

The door swung wide, a blast of hall air rocked the cigarette butt, startled the cockroach, and, feeling the cool draft blowing on his legs, Foley arose.

## THE CAPTIVITY: VII

March was fairly quiet, except for Proctor's plaster cast going up and down the stairs. He proved to be about as pig-headed as Lawrence; he wouldn't lean on your arm, let you carry his books, or ride across the campus if he had the time to walk. When he rested on the landing of the stairs we could all hear him pant. Then he would lie out on his bed, the sweat drying on his hands and face, and a pretty strong smell emanating from the foot he had in the cast. The dirty toes, with the blackened nails, stuck out at the tip. Lundgren said he showed a fine, promising talent for suffering.

He hobbled out to the tennis courts, on his crutches, every afternoon. If Lawrence wasn't playing he sat in the stands, reading a book. Lawrence had lost his car for the rest of the semester, and when the tennis team had a match somewhere they let Proctor ride along as a sort of manager. He could sit with the sweaters and keep his eye on the extra balls. Nobody seemed to care much about freshmen tennis, and it was generally agreed that Lawrence would get what he had coming when he ran into Crewes.

Crewes was a very tall, pimply-faced boy who wore a big white cap, the kind old men wear on winter cruises, and after living for more than ten years in California he was still sallow white. He looked a little underfed and sickly, even out on the court. But he had a game so effortless, and his timing was so perfect that the head of the racket seemed to contain all the strength he might need. He stroked the ball with the same power from both sides. His ground game was so deadly he seldom had to trouble with his overhead. That looked a little sloppy, he was so tall, and his long legs looked awkward, but everything he happened to get his racket on he put away. Off the court,

he hit everything flat, a sort of slapstroke without any top spin, which would skid when it hit, and it always hit inside. The talk had been all Lawrence, in the fall, but in the spring it was all Crewes. He was thin and weak now because he had grown too fast. When he stopped growing and gained a little weight he would be unbeatable. He was that already. He hadn't lost a set in the last two years.

Early in May, Lundgren vaulted twelve feet in the freshmen meet with Redlands, but the following week, trying twelve in practice, he came down the runway and stopped the pole with his nose. It was something he did at least once a year, so he tried to do it early. All the skin peeled off his nose, and after the bandage had been applied, which covered most of his face, you could see that his eyes were turning black. That weekend he couldn't see well enough to pole-vault, but he thought he could see well enough to drive, so he borrowed his uncle's car and we all went to Pasadena to see Crewes play.

We sat in the seats, along the service line. Lawrence had seen the finest players in the world, so watching young Crewes didn't upset him, but what we saw worried the rest of us. Lawrence was very fine on the court, with something that kept you looking at him, but what you were watching wasn't the tennis so much as it was Lawrence. But this kid Crewes was just the other way around. He was nothing at all, but his tennis was wonderful. He had arms like a girl, but everything he hit was like a cannonball. He was still so awkward, and young, that he didn't like to run. Watching him play, you had the feeling that there must be something wrong with his competition. This was not what you felt about Lawrence. His competition often looked pretty good. But he just went on and beat it anyway. That afternoon this gawky kid Crewes won two love sets in about twenty minutes from the fellow who had taken eight games from Lawrence the week before. There were no rallies to speak of, no volleys, and when the kid served his last ball, a nice clean ace, there was no applause. It looked too easy. We didn't talk about it on the drive back.

In my own mind Lawrence's goose was cooked. I'm not sure, either, that knowing that gave me much pain. I think we all had the feeling that it would do him a lot of good.

He didn't meet Crewes till the Conference finals, late in May. They each headed a bracket, and came through to the finals without much trouble, although Lawrence was carried to 7-5 in a pair of sets. Proctor told me he had hoped that three days of tennis would be hard on Crewes. He was not at all strong, but there was no one in the league to get him tired. They gave him just enough exercise to keep him from getting stiff. There was nothing insolent in his game, he ran around and picked up all his own balls, and often seemed surprised that the match had ended so soon. Nobody could wish a kid like that bad luck. He simply had what it took, and there was nothing to do but admire it. Lawrence had something too, but I don't think we felt it was going to be tennis. There was a limit to what you could do with that sort of will.

We had the singles finals on Friday, but there were no more than thirty people, including the players, around to see Lawrence brushed off. Four or five months before, half the boys in college would have walked over to Cucamonga, or into Pasadena, and paid money to see Lawrence get what was coming to him. But it had been coming to him too long. Everybody knew he was going to get it, and that was enough. They didn't hate him bad enough to stick around and watch it take place.

I sat with Proctor at the top of the seats, where we got the sun. Lundgren came along a little later, wearing his sweat pants and carrying his track shoes, a bright fresh bandage over his healing nose. The bags under his eyes were still curdled blue-black. We were there because we were still solid, and when the slaughter was over we had agreed that we would stand up and yell for Lawrence. It was just about the most we could do, and we were going through with it.

The warm-up before the match was very strange. You can't warm up with a man who never lets a ball bounce.

But Crewes didn't seem to know that, and for three or four minutes we had some of the sweetest tennis anybody had ever seen. Lawrence stood at the net, and Crewes stroked those beautiful drives at him. They stopped right when they were sharp, Crewes spun his heavy racket, Lawrence called it and got the serve. He took the down-slope side, since he was not very tall and it helped his slice. But when he walked back to the base line and bounced one ball, his back turned to the seats, I felt exactly the same as the first morning I had seen him on the court. He was out there alone. Just Lawrence, the court, and the ball. For ten or twelve seconds I thought we had it all wrong and that it wouldn't really matter who Lawrence was playing or whether, in the long run, Crewes was the better player or not. Lawrence was out there alone. He was playing against himself. The only game he knew was between him and the ball.

But I didn't feel that way long. In the first game he served just five times, every one of them sharp, well-placed, flat serves, and four of them came back just a little flatter, and right at his feet. He volleyed three of them out. He hit one into the net. He put away one of them but it looked like pure luck. Then he took two points on Crewes' first service, but lost the next four in a row, two of them aces that his racket didn't touch. He won only one point in the next game. After just about twelve minutes of play he was down 4-love. It was really better tennis than it looked, but it looked bad for Lawrence. The kid just had it. He stroked the ball and it worked. The worst of it was that Lawrence's serve, a ball that gave other players so much trouble, seemed to be made to order for Crewes' flat, slapping drive. He put it out of play before Lawrence could move into the court. Crewes won the first set 6-love, and they changed courts.

Since Crewes was stroking the ball so well, any player in his right mind would have modified his serve or tried something else. But not Lawrence. It was not like him to change. He went right on, robot-like, hitting the sharp, flat,



skidding serve that Crewes would slap out of play in Lawrence's court. He couldn't seem to learn. It was clear to everybody how stupid he had been. Everything we had admired about Lawrence began to look like something simple-minded, a flaw in him, really, and not something admirable. A granite-like, subhuman pig-headedness. I think we all felt grateful to Crewes for clearing that point up. Lawrence was just plain dumb. Somehow we had all overlooked it. I even began to feel that I owed this kid Crewes a personal debt. He had opened my eyes. He had broken the spell Lawrence had over us. I thought I might even write Crewes some sort of letter, anonymous of course, telling him how much this little lesson had meant to all of us. I asked Proctor what the score was, and he said love-5. I wondered what I'd do when it was over and I had to yell for Lawrence.

Starting the last game, Crewes asked for some new balls. That was perfectly natural. It seemed more than that only in retrospect. It was Crewes' serve and he would naturally like to use some new balls. His first serve was a clean ace—Lawrence didn't even lean his body toward it, he just walked soberly over to the other court. When I studied his face I didn't remark anything. He looked just as cool, deadpan, and confident as he had at the start. But about half the crowd in the seats got up from their seats after that ace; they didn't want to be around when Crewes finished him off. They hurried off without glancing at the rest of us. Lundgren asked me what time it was, as if he had remembered a date himself, squeezed through the boards at the back of the seats, hung down by his arms, and dropped to the ground. I heard him go off at a trot through the dry brush. Proctor didn't budge, and the two of us watched Lawrence take Crewes' next serve, slap it back at his feet, then come in on the volley and put it away. It didn't seem important to me at the time, but I happened to notice, on that volley, that Crewes' racket turned a little in his hand. The volley wasn't quite clean, and Lawrence slapped it out of play.

As Crewes tossed up the next ball and served it, another five or six people got up and left, leaving about the same number in the stands. They were careful not to look at Lawrence as they walked off. They missed, that is, the turning point of the match. Not that we knew it at the time, but I was watching when Lawrence took the serve and stroked it back just as he had all afternoon. All afternoon that ball had been smashed back at his feet. It was not harder hit or better placed, but it was cleanly hit, very flat, and when the kid reached for it his racket turned in his hand. He took the ball on the wood and watched it float into the net.

There was nothing very unusual about that. It merely made you wonder why it hadn't happened more before. The racket was heavy, and Crewes was not very strong. Everything was the timing, the way he could take the ball just right. I had never seen the kid miss a shot, then stand there like a dubber looking at his racket, but after that miss he stood there a moment, strumming on the gut. Then he came to the net and wiped his sweaty hand on the towel. When he tossed the towel back on the post I saw him glance up, just for a second, at the player in the opposite court. Lawrence was standing at his ease, one hand on his hip. He was glistening with sweat, the band at his forehead had turned a wet, doughish colour, but he had the same old look of poise and cool arrogance. No human being could believe he was down 5-love, in the second love set. And Crewes was human. I could see he couldn't believe that himself.

I saw him smile—not at what he saw, but because what he saw forced him to do something—and when that smile just stuck on his face I knew he was beat. He walked back to the line, served the ball well, and even stroked back the one Lawrence hit at him, but that was the limit—he dropped the next one into the net. So the score was 15-40 at that point. Everything he had, and maybe something he didn't, went into the next ball he served Lawrence, and when it came back he didn't bother to run for it. He just

stood there, and the referee said, "Game Lawrence, one-five."

I don't know how many of us knew the jig was up. We weren't very many. There were only seven of us in the stands. I think Proctor knew it, and after Lawrence had served his first ball, an ace down the centre, I think the referee saw it too. He took a look at his watch as if he thought the sets might run a little long. But they wouldn't. I could have told him that.

Later I heard one of the players say that Lawrence's game kept getting stronger, that he hit the ball sharper, and his flat serve had more pace. I don't think so. It was the same game from the start. It was always a killing game, and he simply never let up. But the man he was playing was a different player—he fell apart. When that racket began to twist in his hand he had a try at lobbing, he went in for slicing, and he mixed chops and pat balls for a spell. He was smart. He did everything Lawrence had failed to do. He did it all pretty well, but it didn't do him any good. When Lawrence put the last point away and the kid turned and threw his racket at it, you would no more applaud than if Lawrence had shot him between the eyes. Which he had. The boy wonder was a dead duck. The jig was up, and we all knew that the man with the finest game in the world was not the same as the world's finest tennis player.

Lawrence walked along between Proctor and me back to the dorms. I carried his rackets, Proctor had the balls he had used in the last set, and Lawrence wore the sweater with the leather on the elbows looped around his neck. The boys who passed us turned for a look at Lawrence's face. He looked about the same, except that he looked very good in a sweat. We sat around in the rooms until he had his shower, then we walked over to the mess hall together, where the news had got around and the shock had had time to wear off. When Lawrence stepped into the hall all the boys that were there stood up. There was no hollering or cheering to speak of; they just stood up. Lawrence put up his right hand, gave them that smile, then Proctor and

I took the boy with the clap down the long row of tables to the one near the door, where he liked to sit. Lundgren waited on our table, and I saw him watching Lawrence with his bloodshot eyes.

## FOLEY: 7

As he crossed Twenty-third Street a few drops of rain fell on his sleeve. He tipped back his head and a drop splashed on his face. A swirl of wind lifted the curb dust into the air, a cloud shadow darkened the corner, and east from the Hudson, like a jet diving, came the rolling sound of thunder. Big drops, widely spaced, puffed the dust at his feet. Paper boy on the corner slipping tarpaulin over his magazines. Afternoon editions featured tear-stained divorcée moment after her child, kidnapped by husband, reported safe. In pocket of blouse she was wearing Foley could see king-size packet of cigarettes and made out that she was smoking choice of discriminating people, Herbert Tareytons. Proctor gone from the headlines. Flood of news, like river of silt, left deposit over what had been news in the morning.

"*Journal?*" said the boy.

Foley dropped a coin on the pile, slipped one from beneath the weight, raised it over his head. Wind-whipped sheet of rain, as he walked south, hit him like spray of machine-gun bullets. Or did it? Stopped a moment to consider if that was right. Read it somewhere. Had never been hit by spray of bullets, but as very small boy stray jet from a fire hose had struck him like a wet sandbag in the chest. Rolled back his eyelids. Torn the flesh at the corners of his mouth.

Foley held the paper over his head and cold trickle of rain ran down sleeve of his trench coat. Felt the coolness where the wet knees of his pants rubbed on his legs. Rain falling in wind-blown sheets with big hollows, puffed out like a sail. Summer squall. He ran along the wall of windows to the first open doorway, ducked inside. Art shop, cards, reproductions along the walls. Remembered

how he used to send Lou Baker every new Matisse. Did not remember stopping. But he hadn't sent her anything for five or six years.

He stopped to look at the cards displayed in racks, one rack labelled MODERN, mostly French, Gauguin, Cézanne, Seurat, and Picasso, vest-pocket reminders of reproductions that hung in bus stations, lounge cars, bedrooms for guests, hallways that were dark and needed brightening up, dress shops that were chic, coffee shops that were smart, bathrooms with colour matching shower curtains, and homes where the hair-oil stains on the paper simply had to be covered with something. And so they were. The French masters had anticipated the need.

He found nothing there, but in a box on the counter, as if it had been painted over the weekend, a pair of haggard lovers floating in a murky, grape-coloured space. The woman bore a certain likeness to Lou Baker, the woman of sorrows, the Deirdre of Montana, and the man bore a striking resemblance to Proctor, the eroded saint. It was called "The Tempest," by Kokoschka—and was one of those things. A somewhat unpleasant expressionistic piece—if you thought, as Foley did, of the pair of them as lovers—with the flesh daubed on carelessly as if it were peeling off. And yet lovers they were, very modern lovers, the eroded salvage expert and his faded blonde companion, now sleeping through the tempest that the Senator had brought down upon them. As the current Prince of Darkness, he had power over the elements. He had stirred up a tempest, and this pair of haggard lovers were caught up in it.

Was it uncanny? This painting was dated 1914. Foresight for Kokoschka, hindsight for Foley, but for the lovers, always at the still point, a timeless tempest in an ever-threatening sea.

"We have that particular item mounted and ready for framing," she said. Foley turned, but she kept her eyes off his face. Probably thought he was embarrassed. Odd picture for a man to be looking at.

"I think this little one will do," Foley replied and held on to it while he fumbled for some money, then changed his mind and let her have the card as he paid for it. While she walked toward the front of the shop he turned back to the rack. Photographs. Old and new. Some of them blurred. He peered at an old one—dating back, it was clear, before the fast-lens cameras—sharp contrast of the blurred hand and face but acid-etched street detail. Curious feeling, therefore, that these people *existed*; that they were really *there*, but by now, as was clear from their clothes, short of some unusual miracle, some freak of longevity, they would be gone. On the card that he faced Foley could see the Seine, with the towers of Notre Dame. Curious and troubled sensation of the melancholy shortness of human life. River, trees, and towers of Notre Dame still there, but the blurred figures were gone. Who were they? Someone, at the time, had called them by their names. Must have felt as immortal as Foley felt—sometimes. Note on back of card said it was view of the Seine, with towers of Notre Dame in the distance, but no mention of the woman with the boa trailing in the breeze. Just a suggestion of a smile, a living face, under the flowered hat. No mention of the man, several steps back, who had turned, who had been caught, that is, in the act of recognizing this woman, or had turned with the *intent* of recognizing her. Did he know her? Or did he merely have that in mind? Was this moment the beginning of life for him—or just another loose end? Two blurred shadows, caught by the camera, moving in a scene that was itself immortal, or looked immortal, like beetles in amber, in that scene so full of so many timeless objects, the trees and the river, the history-haunted towers, the bookstalls with their freight of what was still surviving—a seemingly permanent scene with these impermanent shadows crossing it. That particular river—the one there on the card—would never dry up or cease to charm this city, and those trees along the bank would never shed their leaves. But what about that creature with the Mona Lisa smile, and the blurred feet? She was

not of marble. She was either going toward or fleeing something. Was this man her lover or had she still another rendezvous? The beauty and the mystery of this woman, who had no name, no face, and no destination, seemed to embody, for Foley, the mystery, the charm, and the anxiety of life. All around them was Paris, the immortal city; the delicate trees cast their permanent shadows, but the feet of this woman—like the wings of time—were blurred. Flushed with life, with impermanence, that is, she moved from one solid curbing to another, troubling the waters on the surface of Foley's mind. Was that where she now lived? Was this trembling reflection her immortality?

"Fifteen, twenty-five, fifty, one dollar," she said and placed the coins in Foley's palm, pressing down on them, then put into his hand the blue envelope containing the card. "Thank you very much," she said, her eyes on the doorway, where several wet people were gathered, and absently scratched her scalp with the point of the pencil she wore in her hair. "I suppose they need it in the country," she said and turned back to her work.

Not down in Foley's country, Foley was thinking, where the new crop of mould was growing on his books and in the lining of the shoes that he had preserved for twenty years. Glad he hadn't worn that pair, anyhow, as the rain was hard on them. Looked at pair he was wearing, their tops splattered, and through squall of rain blowing up the street saw poster advertising *God's Half Acre*, new nature film. Mrs. Schurz had seen and recommended. Naturally. As good a place as any to sit out the rain. Foley unrolled his paper, raised it over his head, and splashed through the rain into the dark lobby. Elderly woman in ticket booth a little startled, kept her eye on him.

Taking a bill from his pocket, Foley said, "Is the Disney piece now showing?"

"Showing right now," she said, clawed for his bill, pushed out a ticket as if he might be contagious. At the entrance door Foley stopped and took off his wet coat. He opened the door, then stood there as if an invisible hand held him,



while stale, sour draught of air blew into his face. Hot, like the wind from a subway grating. He stopped breathing, pressed his lips tight, stepped forward into the darkness, directly under smell of motor from circulating fan. Inside, the door closed, he inhaled the same air as if it were clean. Stood in the dark for a moment, but no usher came forward to flash a light on him. A bright image flashed on the screen, reflecting the light back into the room, long but very narrow, sloping fast, and for a moment Foley thought it was empty. Then he saw the sailor. Saw the hat, that is, tipped on his face. Sunk low in first seat on the aisle, knees up, asleep. At the back, clear at the back, where the projector was like a bolt hole in a coal stove, the flickering beam picked up the blonde hair, the wreath of smoke, over a pair of lovers. That was all. Foley moved down the aisle and dropped into a seat. With what was left of Schrafft's napkin, folded, soaked up the rain that had wet his hair, then used damp sheet to wipe the splatter off his shoes. Hearing voice from the screen, speaking in farewell tone of Lowell Thomas on rear-train platform, Foley raised his eyes just as *God's Half Acre* faded from the screen. Blurred away, out of his grasp, like that woman on the French postcard. They were leaving, but over the scene the narrator's voice hovered for a moment, pressed for time, reluctant to be torn away. He *knew*. Also knew that Foley *knew*. God's half acre was not part of *this* world. Fairy story for adults chased off city streets by the rain. Grown-up children at the top of the stairs waiting for bedtime and Winnie the Pooh.

Foley lidded his eyes—the newsreels could give him a headache in four or five minutes—and wondered if he should wait for *God's Half Acre* to come around again. Wouldn't have to. Mrs. Schurz had already described it very well. He was always very patient with Mrs. Schurz, because Mrs. Schurz was very patient with his cat and on certain rare occasions had taken him in when it stormed. Wiped him off with the towel that hung on the hook with her bag of clothespins. Foley never asked her to feed the

cat; the truth was he wouldn't eat a thing but kidney, and Mrs. Schurz believed that all sensible pets should eat table scraps. Not only that, but the cat, Sour Mash, had to have his kidney served au Foley, neatly snipped up, that is, with a pair of green-handled garden shears and dipped—not stirred—into the yolk of a freshly cracked egg. If the egg was not cracked while he stood there waiting he wouldn't touch the stuff.

A cat like that couldn't be left to a woman who had opposing theories on the subject, or, for that matter, to anybody else. He could be left, for brief intervals, to himself. Certain spring and fall nights, with a full moon waxing, Foley had left him to his own devices, but he had stopped when he began to learn what these devices were. But not *that*. No, he really didn't care too much about that. A cat's monsoonlike passion simply came and went. It was one of those things. Over the years Foley had learned to abide with it. But this other passion, as it proved to be, had not been in the Almanac, books on small mammals, or any report that had seen the light of day. For all Foley knew, it had no precedent. It was something new. God's half acre, possibly, had the patent on it. But Foley's own eyes had seen what they had seen, and so had the cat.

One summer morning, as usual, he had got up to salvage a bird. He slipped on his robe, and as he passed the window he reached for his garden gloves, a pair with leather palms that he reserved for this emergency. Through the window he caught a glimpse of the cat. He was coming through the privet with some very strange feathers in his mouth. As Foley stepped into the light he saw that it was not feathers but the tail of a chipmunk, a very small chipmunk; the head was either gone or did not show. Foley stood there waiting for that little point to be cleared up. There was no point rushing out to save what was already lost. The cat crossed the yard to a piece of flagstone, one of the steps leading out to the garden, where he paused and lowered the chipmunk bottom side up. His tiny paws were in the air—a very dead chipmunk in every respect. The cat settled

down, in his customary sphinx-style, and, very casually, he reached out with a paw and gave the chipmunk a cuff. Very lightly, tenderly almost, and he did this once, twice more—when the chipmunk sprang up like spring-wind toy and began to dance. He *danced*, his little tail up like a banner, hopping back and forth on the cool flagstone, four, five times—then he suddenly scooted off. The cat, however, had been prepared for that. He was up, pounced on him, and brought him back in his mouth. He lowered him to the flagstone bottom side up, then relaxed once more. After stroking down a spot on his coat he reached out, tenderly, and cuffed the dead-looking chipmunk. Once, twice, and on the next stroke the chipmunk was up. The dance—the same dance precisely—took place again.

That had been more than enough for Foley, and he raced from the house, ran into the yard, and chased cat and chipmunk to the woodpile far at the back. There the cat, as per custom, let himself be trapped. When Foley raised him, by the scruff of the neck, he saw the bright beady eye of the chipmunk peering at him from between the cat's teeth. It was too much: he may have been a little rough, a little overexcited when he put the cat down, opened his jaws, and waited for the chipmunk to scoot away. But he didn't. He took a single hop to the toe of Foley's slipper and just perched there, staring at him, till Foley got the strength to lift his other foot and shoo him away. With the cat he had returned to the house. He had locked the door, put the cat in the kitchen, then walked through the house to his bedroom, where he noticed that his hands and face were covered with sweat. He ran a tub full of cold water and cooled off in it.

Did it really matter that this took place time and time again? All through the summer, with the chipmunk growing fat and having to be carried by the neck, like a kitten, and after putting on her dance lying out on the flagstone with panting sides, like a fat ballerina. Did it matter? Not particularly. It didn't really matter, because to be believed it had to be shared with one of the species—one of Foley's

species, that is. One who would believe *that*, in return for some wild yarn of his own. But there was no one in Foley's little world—not even Lou Baker, who believed in vampires—to whom Foley could whisper what he had seen. It finally led Foley to look into Darwin, into a book he had owned but never read, and to spend nights brooding on a creative evolution of his own. Founded on what? Well, founded on audacity. The unpredictable behaviour that lit up the darkness with something new. That in some audacious moment of the lunar past, at the mouth of some cave, had resulted in man. A turning on the hinges of his own dark past, toward the light. Through some jewelled chink in Mother Nature's own armour, through some flaw in her own habit of perfection, the glint in some creature's eye shot new rays into the dark. A cat charmer, a lion tamer, a prophet for a new and holy order of chipmunks, who would say to the cat what Joshua had said to the sun. Perhaps, Foley thought, Mother Nature was originating again. Looking over her children to see which one might amount to something. Maybe she had come to feel, quite a bit like Foley, that she had played her cards wrong in the first place and that the time had come to put a few trial irons into the fire. Like that chipmunk. Something really worth while might come out of that. The Origin of a species based on charm, on audacity, on the powers of the dance, and the music that soothed whatever needed soothing in the savage breast. If what Nature had in mind was survival, Man had ceased to be at the heart of Nature and had gone off on a suicidal impulse of his own. And Foley's chipmunk, among others, had got wind of it.

A rumbling sound, so much like thunder that Foley raised his eyes and looked at the ceiling. The blast on the screen, like flash powder, lit up the pattern on the pressed tin ceiling, and the day-old, scattered stubble on the sailor's face. On the screen itself, awesome but familiar, a mushroom cloud bulged from the earth, unfolding slowly, as though the camera had caught some miraculous birth.

The flowering of a plant, the petalled opening of some strange, pollen-driven creature of the deep, bursting with the seeds of life, as this one burst with the seeds of death. As if the earth had become a belching cannon's mouth. And then the narrator's voice, the voice of doom speaking out of the smoke rings, out of the thunder, warning Foley, and the sailor, and the pair of lovers, that man now possessed his future in his own hands. He could either save, that is, or destroy himself. On Foley's face, green with the light that seemed to pour from the scene of destruction, there was an expression more troubling than doom itself. Pity for Foley and his kind. Pity for the doom itself. In the voice of the speaker Foley recognized the everlasting disaster-hungry prophet, since men would rather die, in a righteous foxhole, than come and face the battle of daily life. Doom was it? Extinction? Foley could see the saintly, luminous face of Proctor, the quiet smile radiating a power like doom itself. The power to transform, the raw material made immaterial, heavenly. There seemed to be a law that when faced with evil man turned this power upon himself—those who had the power, that is, to turn and face anything. In the light of this blast, in this moment of revelation, they would turn from the cockroach trapped in the tub, Foley trapped in the past, and take refuge in self-slaughter, or the ultimate truth. The agony in the Garden become the agony in the test tube, the sorrows of Werther become the fission of matter, and that last pair of hounded lovers, energy and matter, were now being probed by the finger of Science, bombarded by a hail of questioning protons, to see what light might flash, what thunder crack, when this final pair was torn asunder.

Foley pressed on his eyes, then opened them and gazed on the symbolic zero of Hiroshima, the surrealist's nightmare of man-made dissolution and vacuity. The camera swept around it, saw that it was bare, that nothing made by man remained in it, then returned to focus on several faint shadows on the asphalt slab. And these? These were the shadows of men—the shadows cast by the blast itself.

The shadows of men in the light of their own man-made sun.

Foley pushed up from his seat, groped for his coat, then went up the aisle without looking at the sailor, or the lovers whom the blast left undisturbed. Wrapped up, cocoonlike, in each other's arms. He thrust open the door, stepped into the lobby, and saw on the puddle at the edge of the street the reflection of white clouds coursing across a freshly washed sky. The woman in the ticket booth, her head nodding, appeared to be asleep.

## THE CAPTIVITY: VIII

Lawrence and Proctor got away a couple of days before the rest of us. Lawrence was going to play clay-court tennis all summer. Proctor was going to work. He had accepted a short-term position with a Manhattan advertising firm.

Lundgren planned to spend the summer in Wyoming, doing a little prospecting around Jackson Hole, and he got a free ride as far as Provo with a Salt Lake freshman. I went back to Chicago on the same mail train that had brought me out.

My mother said she was glad to see me looking so well. Arlene Miller had asked about me when she was home for Easter. She had stopped raising Belgian hares, but her little brother, who was now old enough, had five white rats that he kept in her old rabbit hutch. They were all very friendly, and he walked around with them inside his shirt.

My mother received a letter from the dean, saying that my work was a credit to my father and that I had also given of myself generously. My mother interpreted this to mean that I needed a rest. She thought it better that I not go to summer school or take on outside work. I would do a little reading and help her with a few things around the house.

Arlene Miller did not come home for the summer. She was waiting on tables at the Dells, in Wisconsin, so the evenings on Byron Street were fairly quiet. There was not much noise after the radios were turned off. One night I went into the Loop to see how Chicago struck me after a year in California, and how the shows stood up after the Colton Visiting Artistes course. I found the bands were not quite as smooth as those on the coast. Wayne King was all right, but he struck me as a little monotonous. I didn't care too much for what I heard on the radio. If I heard some-

thing pretty good I bought it, like "You're the Cream in My Coffee," and a very smooth version of "You Took Advantage of Me."

In the sports section of the Sunday paper, usually towards the back, with the Want Ads, I might find something about the tennis situation, and Lawrence. One week in July I saw he was playing up at Lake Forest. When his picture turned up in the rotogravure my mother recognized it. She read aloud to me, at Sunday breakfast, that Charles Lawrence, the West Coast sensation, was staying with his uncle, Clayton Gans, while he took part in the Lake Forest tournament. Clayton Gans was president of Gans, Hardwicke & Bollinger. There was no mention of the kidnapping incident. Clayton Gans was big enough, I guess, to put the damper on something like that.

Near the middle of July I had a card from Lundgren, mailed from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with what I suppose was part of the Hole on the front of it.

*This is country, baby.*

was all it said on the back. My mother waited for me to bring it up, but when I hadn't brought it up, three days later, she asked me if it was customary for young college men to call each other baby. I said it was not customary, but Lundgren was very tall, sort of shy, and he seemed to be inclined to refer that way to people he liked. As an example of what I meant I referred to *Babe* Ruth. My mother had never thought of it in just that light.

I knew I wouldn't hear from Lawrence, but I was surprised not to hear from Proctor. He liked to correspond. But I didn't get a line from him. I sent off a card or two, one showing the statue of Lincoln by St. Gaudens, with a quote from Rimbaud on the back of it, but he didn't respond. I decided advertising was probably taking all his time.

We had a very bad August, with no breeze at night, and I slept on a sheet in the downstairs hallway, where towards



morning it might turn a little cool. Most of the day I spent over in Lincoln Park. I would take along a book or two and sprawl somewhere in the grass. The lunchroom over the boathouse was open, and I would sit there, usually on the balcony, with the sandwich my mother had made and a bottle of Orange-Crush. It was hot on the balcony, but it looked cool out on the pond. On a good afternoon most of the boats were out on it. The water, that late in the summer, was like the duck pond at the Zoo, covered with Cracker Jack, popcorn, crusts of bread, and the boats the kids made out of the Cracker Jack boxes. But it was water and sounded wet when it dripped from the oars. I could hear the creak of the oarlocks even when I sprawled in the grass.

One Saturday in August I sat up to see what the Goodyear blimp was advertising, and watch it go north along the shore and turn in toward Wrigley Field. I was still watching it when I heard somebody on the walk. Hundreds of people went by all the time, but this walker limped, he took one quick stride, as if it hurt him, then came down hard on the other foot. I had to wait till he came from behind the bushes, but I knew that it was Proctor; he had been walking with a limp like that for two weeks before he left. I yelled "Hey!" and put up my hand, but right at that point a streetcar was passing, and the park was full of kids who were yelling "Hey" all the time. He didn't hear me, he went on by, and I didn't yell at him again when I saw that he was wearing Lawrence's clothes. He had a pair of Lawrence's dirty buckskin shoes on his feet. The pants may have been his own—they looked a little tight in the seat for Lawrence—but he had one of Lawrence's crew-neck sweaters around his neck. Not on, just the leather-patched sleeves around his neck. Under the sweater he had one of Lawrence's T-shirts, with the short sleeves. The only thing that belonged to him was the limp.

With that limp he was easy to follow, and we went around the pond, toured the Zoo, then came back to the pond, where he bought himself a hotdog and a candied

apple. He stood there on the pier, watching the boats mill around on the dirty water, and guzzled down the core of the apple, pips and all. He kept the stick to chew on, and headed south-east towards the lake.

I lost him in the crowd around one of the ballgames, then I passed within ten feet of him on one of the benches along the Michigan ~~bridge~~ path. Hot as it was, he had put that sweater on. He would have seen me, but he had his eye on the big apartment house across the street; on a pair of French doors that stood open, about nine floors up. There were chairs out on the balcony, but no one was sitting in them. He kept his eye up there, as if somebody might, then he crossed the street and stepped into the lobby—he went around in the revolving doors, that is, and came right out. He stood around for a while under the sidewalk awning, as if that was where he lived, then he walked along the street where the limousines were parked. He passed four or five, then he eased over to the curb, like a kid, and let the fingers of one hand glide along the fender of that car. It was one of those old Pierce-Arrows, with the fender lights. He let his fingers just glide along the fender, and then, with hardly any limp, he went off in a hurry towards Clark Street, a couple of blocks west.

When I went under the sidewalk awning I made note of the address, painted on the awning, and I had a good look at the old Pierce-Arrow parked at the curb. It had Indiana plates, and there were several racket presses in the back seat. A pair of soiled tennis sneakers was on the floor up front. I had to run to keep Proctor in sight, but over on Clark Street he began to limp, worse than ever, and up near the park he stopped for a Coke. While he was having a Coke I sat in the phone booth across the street. It had just occurred to me that the name of Lawrence might be in the book. There were quite a few Lawrences, as it turned out, but Mrs. Charles Gans Lawrence was down in the book at the same address I had seen on the sidewalk awning. Then I looked up Gans, Hardwicke & Bollinger, who had offices in the Palmolive Building, and since I was sitting there in the

phone booth I gave them a ring. A girl answered the phone, and I asked to speak to Mr. Jesse Proctor. She was sorry, she said, but the offices were closed on Saturday afternoon. I asked her if she could tell me where he lived, and she said Ludlow Terrace, wherever that was. I thanked her very much, and sat there till Proctor finished his Coke

Ludlow was 'a short dead-end street that angled off the park. To get there, Proctor walked through the park, because the grass was easier on his feet, and I sat in the park and watched him walk down to the place where he lived. Ludlow Terrace had once been quite a place. There were concrete flower urns in the yard, a glass-roofed solarium on one side, and out in back, behind the garden, a copper-guttered carriage house. But the solarium was now full of fruit boxes, and a tarpaulin covered the holes in the roof. In the big bay windows on the front there were "Ice" cards and "For Rent" signs.

When I stepped into the hall a woman stood there, talking on the phone. She covered the mouthpiece with her hand and said, "You lookin' for Lois, honey?"

"I'm looking for Mr. Proctor," I replied.

"Second floor, clean to the back," she said and pointed up the stairs with the receiver. When I started up she added, "Clean all the way back, last one on your right." She turned back to the phone and said, "Now wouldn't it be like her to be up there with him! That kid!" She said, then turned to wave me on.

I went up the stairs and down the hall toward the back. All the transoms were open, and someone was playing "Bye Bye Blackbird" on a mouth organ. A woman said, "Will you play somethin' else, for chrisakes?" and for a moment it was quiet. Then "Bye Bye Blackbird" began again.

"You find it okay?" the woman yelled from below.

"Sure," I replied, and on the last door on the right knocked loud enough so she could hear.

"Come in, Sugar," Proctor said, and I opened the door, stepped into the room. Proctor sat at a desk in the back

corner, on a piano stood. He had changed to an old pair of moleskins, one of the Colton gym shirts, and wore a towel looped like a scarf around his neck. He sat there gazing at the palm of his left hand. He had the elbow on his desk, the palm facing my direction, and where the fold creased the palm he had drawn a large human eye, using red and green ink. When he half closed the palm of that hand the eye winked. He didn't look at me. He sat there winking the eye for Sugar's benefit.

I didn't speak up because I knew it would give him a start. On the wall above his desk he had pictures of Lawrence, maybe fifteen or twenty of them, cut from all the papers and the college magazines. On the desk he had a loose pile of yellow paper, a jelly glass with a bunch of sharpened pencils, a pint bottle of milk, and a cake of Fleischman's yeast. A box of graham crackers with one end torn open sat in his lap.

"That better, Sugar?" he said, winking the eye again, but when Sugar didn't answer he turned and looked. For just a split second what he saw almost scared him to death. He got up, spilling the graham crackers, and took one step towards me. "Foley!" he yelled. "For chrissakes, Foley!"

"How are you, old man?" I said, and to help calm him down I picked up some of the crackers he'd spilled.

"Old man—" he said, but he couldn't go on, and wiped the palm of his hand on the leg of his pants. His hand was so sweaty the red and green ink wiped right off. "I'm awfully sorry, old man," he went on. "Thought you were Lois, little chick that lives here." I let that pass, and he said, "Old man, I'm supposed to be in hiding."

"I was going north on Clark," I said, "when I saw you in the park. Saw you cross Clark Street."

"What was it gave me away, old man," he said, "the limp?"

"Well, I did notice the limp," I said.

He shook his head sadly. "Well, I did what I could, mon vieux. Picked a room in the slums, brought in my own food, only took a walk when I needed an airing." He took

the towel from around his neck, wiped the sweat from his face. Then he looped it around his neck again and gripped the two ends like a well-trained fighter.

"You didn't want to be seen?" I said.

He took a swig of milk from the bottle on his desk. "Sorry to hurt your feelings, old man, but when you're working on something like a novel—"

"You're writing a novel?"

"When you're engaged in the first draft of a novel, one with the opening scenes in Chicago—" He closed his eyes, spread out his hands, and let me work out the finer details for myself.

"Well, if I'd only known—" I said.

"Old man," he said, "if you knew I was here, you'd naturally wonder what the hell I was doing in *this* place. You'd naturally wonder what old Proctor was doing in the slums. Right? One thing would just lead to another, and when it did I'd probably have to hurt your feelings." He wagged his head, smiling sadly.

"What's your novel about?" I said and glanced at the yellow sheets on the desk. A small pile of typed sheets were in the case for his typewriter. A big photograph of Lawrence, smashing one away, was under the jelly glass full of sharpened pencils. "It wouldn't be about a tennis player?" I said.

He wiped his face with the towel again. "Old man, a book can have Chicago in it, and not be about Chicago. It can have a tennis player in it without being about a tennis player."

I didn't get it. I probably looked it, for he went on. "Take this book here, old man—" and held up one of the books he had swiped from some library. Along with the numbers I could see Hemingway's name on the spine. "There's a prizefighter in it, old man, but it's not about a prizefighter."

"Is it about the sun rising?" I said. I knew that was part of the title.

"Goddam if I know what it's about," he said and opened it up, as if he might have overlooked it.

"Well, it's your headache," I said and turned to see who was rapping on the window. My mother used to make the sound when she tapped with a hairbrush to call me in. The tapping came again, but when I looked at Proctor he had his nose in the book. I figured that must be his Sugar, so I stepped forward, jerked on the cord, and let the blind roll up. Just as I did Proctor made a lunge for it, but too late. So there we were, facing the window, and about a yard away, across the airwell, was a woman without a stitch of clothes on her, combing her hair. She was in one of those poses you see on postcards, and on the postcard it might have been pretty fetching. Her long blonde hair hung to her waist. The garter rings were bright red on her white legs.

"Kee-rist!" I said, gave a yank on the blind cord, and brought my hand down on the sill, my knuckles hitting the edge of a metal ashtray. I didn't feel much but when I looked at my knuckles they were covered with blood.

"Damnation!" Proctor said and passed me his towel. I wiped the blood off and saw that I'd sliced them pretty bad. "We better go rinse them off, old man," he said and led me across the hall to the bathroom, where I sat on the stool and let my hand hang over the sink. "Let the chlorine sterilize it," he said and turned on the cold-water faucet; then he walked back and slipped the bolt in the door. He still had the Hemingway in his hand, but there was no place in the bathroom he could put it, so he just stood there with it, his finger marking the place.

As he probably felt worse than I did, I said, "I don't see how you get much work done."

"Opening scenes owe a lot to her, old man."

"There's a poule in it too?"

"Where'd you think he gets the clap, old man—off the stool seat?"

I hadn't known Proctor knew about the clap at all. "I understood he got it in Paris," I said.

"Old man," said Proctor, sitting down on the tub, "we don't have much, but we've got the clap. You don't have

to leave the country to pick up that."

"If I were writing a novel," I said, "I'd have him get the clap in Paris."

"The Chicago clap is good enough for me," Proctor said.

It was for me too, but sitting there on the stool, after what had happened, I felt the need for conversation. Through the transom we could hear that kid playing "Bye Bye Blackbird" again. The room was nearly dark except for the tub, the rim shiny from people sitting on it, and the white knob on the door, which somebody rattled every now and then.

"Old man," he said, "you think I'm a goddam heel?"

"I don't know what to think," I said.

"Well, I am. I've been a heel for so long, old man, I'm going to make something good out of it. I'm going to write the greatest book a shit-heel ever wrote."

"Baudelaire was no slouch," I said.

"I could make him yell doctor, old man."

I didn't know but what he could. A lot depends on your standards, and he had the highest admiration for Baudelaire.

"I know what Lawrence thinks," I said, but I didn't mean that the way it naturally sounded. I didn't mean to imply that we had talked it over behind his back. "He thinks you've got the gift," I said, and the book Proctor was holding dropped to the floor. He was sitting on the tub, but he didn't stoop over to pick it up. "He didn't mean the gift of the gab either," I said. I knew that was what he must be thinking. I had thought so myself, at the time, but it was not what Lawrence meant. I didn't know, as a matter of fact, what the hell he meant.

"This is no bullshit, old man?" Proctor said.

"He said it like he meant it," I said, "whatever the hell he meant by it."

That was all we said about it. Proctor just sat there staring into the tub. I thought he was sitting there mulling it over, but he suddenly got up, came back to my corner, and unrolled about eight or ten feet of toilet paper. Then he went back to the tub and placed it over the slope at the

back. He tapped the drain end of the tub with the toe of his shoe, and a big cockroach, trapped in the tub, came up the ramp so fast it nearly spilled over at the top. Then it went around the rim, one game leg dragging, and disappeared through a crack in the wall plaster.

"Proctor Salvage Operations," he said and rolled up the paper he had put down. He came back to the corner for a look at my hand "How's it feel, old man?"

It didn't feel good at all, but I said, "Fine." I added, "I think I better run along, though, just in case, and get something on it."

"Mind if I put you in the book, old man?" he said and smiled, but when I said, "Me and the cockroach, you mean?" he stopped grinning. I could see that the cockroach was already part of it. I wasn't. The salvage operations hadn't got around to me. "It's all right with me," I said, "but I think you better clear it with the cockroach," then we left the bathroom and walked down the hall to his door.

"It's been a great pleasure, old man," he said, "but I better get on with my packing."

"You leaving?"

"Got to scoot for Brooklyn tomorrow, old man. I'm a heel, you know, but I owe it to my mother."

"In that case," I said, "I'll see you back at school."

"Sure thing," he said, slapped me on the back, then let his door stand open while I walked down the hall.

I passed a tall blonde girl who had been eavesdropping on the landing of the stairs. She had a saucer with some pieces of fresh fudge on it, and when I got to the landing she said, "You Lawrence?"

'No, I'm Foley," I said, taken by surprise.

"Just so you're *not* Lawrence," she said, and she stood there on the landing till I reached the door. It made me wonder how much Arlene Miller had grown since I'd seen her last.

The day before I left for school I had a card from



Proctor, mailed from Santa Fe. They had stopped at the La Fonda, he said, to pick up some more towels. On the following Thursday I went out on the mail train that got me to Colton by Sunday morning, and I rode up with the baggage man to our new suite of rooms in the dorms. Thanks to Lawrence we now had a tile shower, a fireplace with a gas log, and the *Los Angeles Times* delivered every morning at the door. It was lying there in the hall when I walked up. A big two-column picture of Lawrence was on the front of it. I thought he might have just won another title—they were playing tournament in southern California—but the caption read:

TENNIS STAR SURVIVES  
FREAK ACCIDENT

I read that Lawrence, with his college companion, had driven off the road near Williams, Arizona, where the lanterns marking a detour in the road had gone out. His companion, Jesse Proctor, suffered barbed-wire cuts on the arms and face. Lawrence had escaped with a crushed finger on his right hand.

"That you, baby?" Lundgren said, calling to me from the shower; then he said, "I will now sing you a little ditty," and sang, "'Who's going to bite your neck when my teeth are gone.'"

Then he came to the door of the room, the towel in his hand. The summer at Jackson Hole had been good for him. He was black except for the white saddle at the crotch. He dropped the towel on the floor, stepped on it, ran his hands down his wet body so that the crisp golden hairs all went the same way. Riding on a burro had rubbed some of them off between his legs.

"Pretty swanky little dump, eh, baby?" he said, and we looked at the room together, and the brown imitation gas log in the fireplace. "I miss the smell of the can though," he said and combed his hair. Turning to face the mirror, he said, "What the hell's eating you, baby?"

"Lawrence banged up his right hand a little," I said and held up the morning paper.

Lundgren walked across the rug, leaving his wet tracks on it and read the article.

## FOLEY: 8

A squirrel, like a stone skipping on water, hopped across the asphalt of Washington Square, the surface dark with ~~glistening where the puddles reflected the sky. Foley made~~ his way between them, careful not to shatter what was now at peace. The smell of dogs, wet leaves, and moist earth hovered in the air trapped under the trees. He took a seat on a bench where the leaves dripped rain on the walk. He was reminded—he sat there, that is, in order to be reminded—of Peter Foley, still to be found, unfaded, on the flyleaf of the Latin books on his shelves. There was about *that* Peter Foley something reassuring, and something puzzling. He seemed to be a pleasant sort of character to know; he was fond of his mother, a hard worker, anxious to master the pluperfect subjunctive, and every bit as immortal as Tom Swift or the Rover Boys. He did not change, grow up or grow old, marry the right or wrong girl, come to a good or bad end, or merely peter out, as most men seemed destined to do. No, *that* Peter Foley was out of time, time and the river of silt had passed him by, although a certain erosion was noticeable in the softer parts. The heart, the liver, and the pudding in the hollow round of the skull.

Down the steaming walk, slantwise across the square, Foley could see the mute gallery around the chess players—four men playing, ten, twelve men gathered to watch. Absorbed. Iron filings gathered around the still point. World around them breaking up like an ice pack, but peace on the cake on which they were floating—peace and chivalrous war with the knights and the hazardous life of the pawns. Man nearest to Foley, hat in hand, was avocado-shaped veteran in fireman's braces, fanning himself with the hat, not from the heat but from concern. He could see what was

coming. Could hardly bear to wait. Ulcerous price of the terrible gift of prophecy. At his side, clasping rolled newspaper, tall man with wide, forked hips, like a mare, legs of pants spaced out so child could run between them, play London Bridge. Right arm dangling large yellow hand, curiously disembodied in the shadow, palm turned back like fingered flipper hanging at rest. Fingers twitched as if dusting invisible cigarette. Swarthy keeper of vines now an idle white collar, hand reduced to head-scratching, crotch-adjusting, and gestures on the thin air to illustrate a fine point. Five-fingered toy to help idle grownups pass the time. Foley glanced at his own soft house-man's hand, fingers almost hairless, palm almost fleshless, worn down to smooth claw for correcting papers, bizarrely jewelled with old Navajo craftsman's coin silver ring. Also nicotine stains, the egghead's suntan, several pitted scars resembling moon craters, left over from rash of big warts he had chewed on as a boy.

"God bless you!" the voice said, but for a moment Foley missed the man behind it, for no more than his head showed above the signboards and no more than his feet below them. A human sandwich. "God bless you!" he repeated and, seeing something in Foley's face that disturbed him, he poked an arm from the sandwich and crooked his hand around to point at the sign. Foley read :

DON'T WORRY!

G O D

H A S

A

L A Y A W A Y

P L A N

He may have looked relieved as the man turned away, offered his message to the couple on the bench across from Foley. "God bless the little one!" he said. They sat with a baby stroller between them, the little one pink and sore with a summer rash. The mother smirked, but the father

with an animated face said, "Kitchy, kitchy, kitchy!" He bent over the child and made a corkscrew noise, a wide-eyed baby face.

Foley closed his eyes, but on the lids he saw the great kitchy-kitchy lover, Charlie Chaplin, in his endless pursuit of the blind flower girl, his face forever pressed to the window of the florist shop. Another Layaway Plan. The first. Rapt face of the lover in love with love, the promises men live by, and the heavenly Bazaar of America.

"Kitchy-kitchy-kitchy!" the young man said, and the sour taste of pity coated Foley's tongue. He opened one eye to watch human sandwich, blessing all as he passed, cross the square to the men's room, leave his signboards parked where they would carry on the good work. Then he glanced at the bride, none could be fairer, only one of her kind with other lovers unhappy, thin, sallow-sad girl maybe twenty-six, maybe forty-one. On her feet a pair of Gimbel's huaraches, plus dirt from cold-water flat.

Foley sounded an Ahhhh, as if under pressure, and watched father toss his ash-pink child in the air. On his animated face, in his kitchy-kitchy-kitchy, well-advertised concern and security for loved ones, long vacations with pay, carefree old age in ranch-style home, stone's throw from the ocean, cool, tangy breeze stirring flowers along the pickets, flaps on beach umbrella thrown up in their yard shading ever-fair bride from Time's cruel onslaughts, and holding in her lap first bouncing grandchild of the male line. In neat two-car garage, oiling the power mower, friendly head of house smoking his Kaywoodie pipe as up the driveway comes smiling mailman with Rock of Ages monthly insurance cheque.

Dim and phantom-faint, ghostly as moon shadows, and yet like something tattooed on his eyeballs, over this diorama, hovering, Foley could see familiar shades. The shades of Lawrence and Proctor in this young man, the shade of Lou Baker in this faded bride, and in their dream of happiness, the udder-dripping cow, the oranges that grew to fall in the kitchen window, Foley recognized the bold,

faint-hearted shade of himself. Shades of nature, that is, imitating art. The Girl of the Golden West, stars in her eyes, in an up-to-date Gimbel-gunned model, and the man with the golden dreams and the same immortal resolves :

No wasting time at Shafter's  
No more smoking or chewing  
Read one improving book or magazine per week  
Save \$5  
Be better to parents

Shades of shades, but still casting their shadow, the same golden sun lighting up the diorama, where the brooks too broad for leaping were easily leaped in the Elevator shoes. A little rough at the start, even a little sordid, but one fine day—as advertised in *Life*—that brook too broad for leaping would be lapping at the door. A heartbreak dream, with the soundtrack by Chaplin, full of young men still fighting Hemingway's war, still loving and seducing Fitzgerald's women, and believing in perfection—a machine-made perfection—if anything at all. A witness to the power, the glory, and the terrible risks of art.

The sun was still rising, or not rising, but it would not stand still. Coitus interruptus now continuous, the sex life of male, the female, and the gall wasp, given the green light, the VD smear, the analytic and disarming candour that came from a close and detached observation of the erotogenic zones. The *facts*, as anyone would tell you, spoke for themselves. But not for Lawrence, not for Proctor and Lou Baker, not for those shadows on the streets of Hiroshima, and not for those shades sprouting on the graves where the radioactive corpses were buried. They did not speak for these things, nor in this language. They spoke for themselves. The new man, the cybernetic marvel, opened his plastic jaws and said, *I am a fact finder*, then smiled to show his teeth and gums coated with Nature's green. Under a cloud of unknowing, Foley arose, walked south across the square.

Hearing the whinny of Pegasus above him, he tipped his head back, gazed at the sky. The Flying Red Horse? It would not have surprised him. Nor did what he saw. There on the cooling sky, tossing their manes, were the heads of two big dray horses, protruding from the window on the top floor of a tenement. At the adjoining windows, unperturbed, were human heads. Curious about Foley. Not about horses peering from the windows of tenements. Wisps of straw fell from the blue lips of the white horse as she whinnied, blending with the voices, the traffic noise, and the persistent tang of fermenting manure. Both fine horses, wearing collars, and Foley waited for them to walk out on thin air, flap their wings, and make off for the cumulus peaks. Passing strange, but not at all stranger than Peter Foley, there on the corner, having come from no more than the glint in the eye of a chipmunk with nothing on its mind but a sublime audacity.

Foley walked to Broadway, took a southbound bus for a whiff of sea air or a ride on the ferry, but, passing City Hall square, he saw the grey stone towers of the Brooklyn Bridge. He left the bus and, in the lines of a force like the iron filings around Lundgren's magnet, walked back through the square and out on the overhead bridge promenade.

When he had lived in Brooklyn, in the room beneath the room where Hart Crane had lived and worked on his poem, Foley had walked out on the bridge every day. He was writing no poem, nor anything else, but all that summer he thought he might, and he hoped that living in a house where poems had been written might help. It didn't, but he had a wonderful time.

He had discovered the bridge for himself—that is, Lou Baker had not told him about it—and it was Foley who had told her about Brooklyn Heights. She had taken an apartment across the street, one at the back with a view of the river and a small balcony where her gentlemen friends liked to sit. The balcony was so small the chairs sat inside, but the feet of the guests could be seen on the railing.

There were plants there now, and television aerials on

the roof. Lou Baker no longer had that particular apartment—she had moved farther down the block, beyond the modern cliff dwellings where the roofs were spotted with beach umbrellas. Foley had never been there, nor had he walked across the bridge since the war. A strong wind now blew up the river, flapping the flags on the excursion steamers and whipping up a scud of whitecaps on the slate-blue surface of the bay.

There on the bridge, spooning ice cream from a carton, Lou Baker had turned Crane's phrases on her tongue and let Foley understand that the Brooklyn Bridge was America. A span of art, that is, between the dream and the reality. A bird's wing, no more, across the broken gap of memory. Become a listful of words, a modern corn-dance ceremony for making rain.

At such moments Lou Baker, a raddled oracle, her Left Bank hairdo like a wig on her gauntness, was nevertheless possessed by the authentic Delphic air. They had not been deceived, she would have him know. They had been possessed by a truth. Perhaps by too many truths, as it happened, every other one a seeming contradiction, but as they eroded, like Proctor, the bedrock truth stuck out. Lou Baker knew it, Foley knew it, and he had watched her yellow fingers fumble at her lips for the tobacco crumbs that were no longer there. Had not been since that Delphic spring in Paris, when she had rolled her own.

As if time had not passed, as if life had not been lived, as if she were still Montana Lou Baker and that endlessly rising sun had never set.

Gull dung, wind-borne up the river, splashed on the bridge cable vibrating with traffic and left a creamy splatter on the back of Foley's hand. He wiped it on the iron rail along the walk, picking up a smear of rust. As he passed the Squibb tower he inhaled the aroma of the paste.

On Henry Street he paused to consider a row of bottles, packed in straw like eggs and at the back of the window an advertised special, the square Jack Daniel's bottle with



the sober black label. He whistled softly, reading the price. He passed, turned and came back, and with the Jack Daniel's in a tight paper bag he cut through the dim, haunted lobby of the St. George Hotel. Then headed down the street towards the gap over the river, the soft-focus view of Manhattan, seen through the haze of river traffic and tugboat horns. Turning left, on Columbia Heights, heard wind-blown song of street singer, in street shadow himself, but facing windows where the sun was ablaze. From one such window, partly curtained, a coin fell end over end, sparkling then dropped soundlessly, like lead, in the summer-soft street. Singer did not stoop, but with bird's cocked eye sidled quickly to where he could put a shoe on it, one that was hand-boned, hand-stained, and bench-crafted, but unshined.

## THE CAPTIVITY: IX

Lundgren and I were still in bed the morning that Proctor came in and yelled, "Where the hell is everybody?" then went off leaving the door open, as if the rooms needed a change of air.

Later that day, between classes, I saw him waxing the floor in the mess hall, the new barbed-wire scars in a white criss-cross on the top of his head. Another ran along his jaw, like bone showing through his beard. In the evening Lawrence was back, black as an Arab and looking great. There was not a scratch on him that you could see, but he was wearing a pair of chamois gunning gloves. When he came in he gave me that smile and said, "You'll pardon the glove, old man," and put into my palm the good fingers of his right hand. They had saved the thumb. Enough of it, that is, to fill out the glove.

We had our first class rally that night, in the Greek Theatre, under the stars. Nobody nominated Lawrence, Proctor, or Lundgren for anything. I was nominated for class treasurer but declined. Sydney Brown, who ran the school Vespers and introduced all the Visiting Artistes, won the presidency from Clip Gower, a football man. A resolution was proposed and passed that all members of the class, high and low, should take more active participation in college life. Then the candles were lit, the glee club sang, and the flame of life was passed across the darkness, hand to hand, in the traditional flame-passing ceremony. The Ghosts danced the ghost dance, wearing the white sheets with the skull and crossbones glowing in the dark, and the giant Colton C was lit up on the mountains, blinking like a banner hanging from a blimp, and as we walked back through the wash to the dorms Proctor said, "Christ, what bullshit!"

We came back through Phipps, under the open windows, past the lampshades with the limericks that glowed with the lights off and the beds that were shared by dolls that said "Mummy" and giant teddy bears. We came down through the trees, orange and lemon, across the court where green dinks floated in the fountain, to where the car that had also survived the accident was parked. It was low, with nickel-plated wire wheels, a small visor-type windshield, a cockpit seat, and the word Bugatti under the hood, stamped on the motor. Proctor helped Lawrence cover it with a tarpaulin. The barbed wire had scratched it up but not so you would notice it.

Our swanky suite of rooms had real leather chairs, Van Gogh reproductions on the walls, and a set of Loeb Classics on the built-in bookshelves near the door. They had come out in a crate from Brentano's in New York. Lawrence had told his mother that one of his friends was very scholarly. The north wall of the study was a picture window facing the foothills, the green Phipps campus, and the mountains brown and distant in the summer haze. In December, after the rains, they would move in close. The foothills would turn green, with violet shadows, the grey road up the mountain would turn black, and the rocks in the stream bed would shine in the moonlight as if they were wet. The channel through the wash would run fire all day, run ice all night.

My room was on the north, facing the mountains, and I could see the rolling dips in the road where the carloads of freshmen, coming down from the mountains, dropped so low they were out of sight, the sun bright on the yellow buttons of their dinks. A really good-looking class, better than average; every man in the class would gain weight on the average, neck and lose his first love on the average, smoke and have his first sinful thoughts on the average, but not *above* average. No, just average. A very fine class. No problem like Lawrence, who refused to ground-stroke, no marksman like Proctor, with a hole in foot, and, needless to say, not a man on the campus with the clap. Just

his pimples, and the average run of athlete's foot.

Lawrence came back from the hospital with a phonograph that never needed winding and an album of very dirty songs that Dickie had sent him from France. It didn't really matter, however, since they were all in French. In the evening Lawrence would put on the records and let them play till he fell asleep, when Proctor would go in and switch off his light, turn off the machine. Lawrence kept a sponge-rubber grip under his pillow that he would squeeze while listening to the records, the idea being that he would learn to hold a racket again. But that would take time, as the dean said, when he asked me over to talk about Lawrence, and until that happened he had this serious adjustment to make. What to do, that is, with all the free time he now had.

In October we began to see what he had in mind. He would go to bed early, listening to his records, then he would wake up about one or two o'clock, take a shower, and go for what he called a little spin. There was no law against it. It was very safe driving at that time of night. If there was a valley fog he went up the mountains and cruised around in the moonlight, somewhere above it, and if there was no fog he might drive out to Twenty-nine Palms. Or down to Tia Juana, from where he'd bring us back black-paper cigarettes. There was no law against it, if he wanted to do it, but the problem was he didn't like to do it alone. He liked to cruise around with somebody else in the cockpit. Somebody like me.

Proctor couldn't stand the gaff. He had a full schedule and sat up nights working on his novel. Lundgren couldn't make it because his long legs wouldn't fit in the car. When he rode in it at all he had to hang his legs outside. The cockpit was very small, and his knees wouldn't fit under the cowl. So that left me. It turned out that I fit in the seat pretty well. I couldn't spare the time either, not really, but someone had to handle Lawrence's adjustment, and I preferred riding around to taking on his Sophomore English themes. We found a girl at Phipps to do that in exchange

for a run of blind dates.

You don't talk much in a cockpit type of car, with your face in the wind. If we started early, a little after midnight, we could drive to Yuma and back before morning, or be in Las Vegas just about the time the winter sun came up. Lawrence didn't drive so fast, on the average, but he just didn't trouble to stop. On the cold foggy nights we might pull in for hot coffee, but not much else.

As he usually got me up around one o'clock there was not much point in my going to bed, so I would sleep all afternoon, then work right through till I heard him getting up. The day seemed to start for him with that drive rather than to end. He took a shower and brushed his teeth as if he were going out to the tennis courts. It wasn't every night, but I would say we averaged four nights a week. I wore a beret to keep my hair from blowing, and because of the strong draught back through the motor I wore a pair of Proctor's sweat pants, to keep it from blowing up my legs. We could go from sea level to ten thousand feet in less than an hour. Both the fog and the mountains, at that time of the morning, could get pretty cold.

One little problem we had was gas, which we carried in five-gallon oil cans. Lawrence never seemed to know, when he started out, where he might end up. One night we had breakfast in the Harvey House at Needles, another morning we had it in Tia Juana, and we often stopped for chili in a diner outside Bakersfield. One night we drove over and had a moonlit look at Owens Lake. When it was light enough to see we took in Death Valley, then came back across the mountains to the valley and turned up on the campus just in time for my eleven o'clock Chaucer class.

I got in a good nap after lunch, as a rule, but Lawrence got by on the sleep he got in the evening, plus the fairly long naps in his Phipps History of Art seminars. He wore a trench coat in the car, but nothing on his head—his hair was too short to blow around—and for driving he had that pair of finely stitched Swiss gunning gloves. They took on the colour and the feel of a good pair of driving hands. He

wore them all the time, washed them in the shower, and let them shape-on while they were drying. They gave him the look of a nice welterweight boxer doing a little roadwork.

One night we went to Las Vegas and had coffee in a drug-store with a crowd of Hollywood boys and their women, and one of these babes, after sizing up Lawrence, came over and sat down. She was a fairly smooth blonde of the Marion Davies type. Somebody had told her that letting smoke drift from her nose did something for her.

"You sterilizing something, doll?" Lawrence said, but I could see she didn't mind that. She even liked it, I think. Like Lawrence, it was unusual.

"You boys over here all alone?" she said.

"We drove over here with that in mind, baby," Lawrence said.

"A boy like you think you can get away from women, honey?" she said, gasped in some smoke, held it down, till I thought sure it would come out of her ears.

Lawrence put his gloved hands on the table and said, "A little girl like you ever screw around with a boy wearing gloves?"

It wasn't so much what he said, but how he put it, with the gloves, the palms up, there on the table, and all the smoke the girl had swallowed came out in a rush. She was wearing a short-sleeved sweater, and I could see the goose-flesh rise on her arms. Lawrence didn't make a move, he just sat there, and when this girl thought her legs were steady she got up and joined the crowd standing around one of the pinball machines. She left her Marlboro cigarette in the saucer of Lawrence's cup.

That happened over the Thanksgiving recess. We didn't have to rush right back to school, so we went up the east side of the Sierra Nevadas to Goldfield and Tonopah. Lawrence seemed to like something about the old mining towns. Under the seat in the car he had the Colt that Proctor had shot himself with. We were never held up or asked any questions, but I think Lawrence wished we would be, and he took shooting lessons on the theory that it was good for

his grip.

We came back through Sequoia to Bakersfield, where we stopped at our usual diner, one that featured chili poured over hot tamales and side bowls of chopped onions. When we came in the cook was listening to the scores of the football games. He had a match in his mouth, and when the last score was mentioned he broke off a piece of it, spat it out.

"You hear that?" he said and turned to look at Lawrence.

"Hear what?" Lawrence said.

"USC beat the Bears," he said.

"Ha!" Lawrence said.

The cook nodded his head, then he thought it over, looked at Lawrence, and said, "What do you mean, *Ha*?"

"I mean *Ha*," said Lawrence.

I had no idea what he meant. I had never heard him use it before.

"You didn't expect it?" said the cook.

"What, my friend?" said Lawrence. The cook was an old man, a really old one, so Lawrence had to call him something other than that.

"The Trojans to win," said the cook.

"Nobody ever wins, my friend," replied Lawrence.

The cook looked at me, and I stirred up my chili.

"What the hell you mean, nobody ever wins?" said the cook.

"He means nobody wins them *all*," I said, knowing pretty well he meant more than that. I didn't want him telling the cook just what he did mean.

"That what you mean, kid?" the cook said, but when he said "kid" I said to hell with him. No one who wasn't asking for it would ever refer to Lawrence as "kid."

"I mean nobody wins," Lawrence said calmly. "You can't beat the game."

"What game?" said the cook.

"Any game," replied Lawrence.

"So you're one of those—boys," said the cook. He had it right on his tongue to say "punks," or something like that.

but somehow he didn't. He put his hands on the counter and studied Lawrence as if he could see right through him.

"What he means is the game is the *thing*," I said. "If the game is the thing, why, then nobody wins it." That was not too good, but it was a way out, if anybody wanted it. I looked at the cook, and he looked fairly pleased. Then I looked at Lawrence.

"Bullshit, old man," he said.

I think it might have passed over if it hadn't been for the "old man." I was facing the counter, the glassed-in pie case and the hole where they pushed through the dirty dishes, where a sad-faced woman leaned with her head propped on her hands. When she heard the word pronounced by Lawrence she closed her eyes. The cook took a spoon from the bowl on the counter, rapped it on the counter, then pointed at a sign tacked over the pie case :

PLEASE WATCH YOUR HAT, COAT,  
AND YOUR LANGUAGE

"Bullshit," said Lawrence, backed off the stool, took a bill from his pocket, and dropped it on the counter. I followed him down the aisle to the door at the front.

"Give him back his dirty money," the woman said, but the cook just stood there, holding the spoon, and we went down the steps at the side and got into the car. The cook came to the door and watched us drive off.

We did the stretch from Bakersfield to Los Angeles pretty fast. I mean, we did it in about an hour less than usual. But north of Pasadena we ran into smoke; they were smudging in the groves along the foothills, and we could see the pots flaring orange and red like Christmas lights. We stayed up on high ground, out of the valley where the smoke began to gather, cruising along on the narrow black-top roads between the trees. When the road angled north or opened out into the wash, we could see the fresh snow-cap on the peak of old Baldy. Lawrence never said a word, as a rule, but he let the car ease up a bit and remarked that



he didn't mind a little snow at Christmas.

I said that I did and I didn't, which was the way I felt. I was thinking of Chicago, where the snow was not white very long. In the abstract I might like snow at Christmas, but in Chicago it was soon dirty slush.

"You say you do and you don't, old man?" Lawrence said and let the car slow up to almost a standstill.

"If you mean the snow," I said, "I do and I don't."

Lawrence brought the car to a stop. "Is there anything you like outright, old man?" I looked at him as if I hadn't caught the gist of what he said. "Anything you really like, old man? Anything you prefer to the usual bullshit?"

"We were parked on a sloping piece of blacktop road in a grove of lemon trees. The new crop was nearly ripe, and in the car lights they looked like Christmas tree ornaments. There were quite a few things that I liked, naturally, but I couldn't seem to think of one of them. Besides, I couldn't take the question seriously. It wasn't like Lawrence. It was completely out of character. He seemed to think this word he'd picked up from Proctor covered everything.

"Don't get me wrong, old man," he said. "I admire it very much."

"You admire what?"

"The way you take the bullshit with the straw, old man," and I could see he meant that as a flattering remark. He didn't have it just right, but I understood what he meant.

"Well, I try to take things as they come," I said.

"I admire it very highly."

"It's not much to admire. I can't honestly say I admire it much myself."

"If I can't do it I admire it."

It must have been at the back of my mind, for I said, "Just what is it you admire in Proctor?"

"What he *admires*, old man. What he admires won't let him down."

"Well," I said, thinking it might cheer him up, "one thing he admires is you."

"You don't say?"

"He admires you very highly."

He shook his head slowly. "Bullshit, old man."

"Just what the hell isn't bullshit?"

I don't think he expected me to put it to him like that. He was sounding like Proctor, and I suppose he thought that nobody ever put that one to Proctor. He thought it over for a while, then without saying a word he got out of the car. He went up front in the lights, then along between the lights to a shallow place in the ditch, where he waded through the weeds to where the pots were lit in a lemon grove. He went along one of the furrows, where the ground was ploughed, and as he got close to one of the pots I saw him take his left hand and try to loosen the fingers of his glove. That took time, since he couldn't do much with his right-hand thumb.

"What's up?" I said, but he didn't seem to hear me. I yelled "Hey" at him, but he didn't turn his head. He just stood there, about a yard from the smudgepot, tugging at the fingers of his gunning glove, and without thinking one thing or another I climbed out of the car. He was a good fifty yards away from me. "Oh, Lawrence!" I yelled, playing for time, and as I stumbled through the ditch I tripped over a broken hoe handle. I picked it up without thinking, but I had it in my hand as I ran towards him, and when I got close enough to see what he was doing I hit him on the head. I didn't get him square, because he was stooped over, one shoulder hunched up. He half straightened up, made a quarter turn so I could see his hand blackened by the smudge smoke, then fell on his back.

I think I might have hit him again if he had moved. He was out cold, but he had that goddam smile on his face. I picked him up, got him back to the car. When I dumped him into the cockpit some of the black on his burned hand rubbed off. Not the flesh, just the oily smudge that had blackened it. The hand was burned all right, but not so bad as I had thought. Then I wondered if I might have killed him when I hit him with the hoe handle; the right side of his head was sticky with blood. But I found that he had a

strong pulse. I propped him up in the cockpit, the visor tipped back so the cool night wind would blow in his face, then I just drove around through the smoking groves until he came to. He had his head on my shoulder, and he left it there. He didn't say a damn thing. I drove around another hour, till I felt sure about him, before I took him back to the dorm, where he climbed out of the car without any help from me and went up the stairs. I let him go on ahead while I spread the tarpaulin over his car. I did that, smoked a cigarette, then I went up and found him in the shower, with his smudge-blackened hand sticking out of the curtain, waiting for me. He stayed in the shower while I covered his hand with some olive oil from Lundgren's army locker and wrapped it up in one of Proctor's face towels, pinned at the wrist.

"Thanks, old man," he said when I'd finished, but I didn't say a damn thing. All I could think of to say was that he was a crazy sonuvabitch. I went into my own room, closed the door, and while I lay wondering if he wasn't *really* crazy, he played 'Sam, the Old Accordion Man,' until Lundgren shut him up. When I knew he was asleep I got up and turned his goddam light off. He *looked* asleep, lying on his side so that the bump on his head was up and the hand with the towel wrapped around it like a baseball mitt on his chest. It seemed hard to believe that he was actually asleep, but I think he was. He could do just about anything he had a mind to, so he had done that.

They smudged all night up in the foothills, and in the morning when I went to my classes the smoke was over the valley like a dark pool of oil. In the afternoon I got in Lawrence's car and went back to the grove where I had hit him, because when I hit him he had dropped one of his gloves. I didn't want anybody turning up with something like that. They all thought we were crazy, and that would put the cap on it.

In the evening Proctor stepped into my room and closed the door. I thought he was wondering what the hell had happened and wanted me to fill out the story, but I had

made up my mind that this was too crazy for *anybody's* book. It would die with me, since I would never write a book myself.

But he helped himself to my cigarettes, sat down on my bed, and said, "I'm not here to question you about the arson, so you can relax."

"I'm relaxed," I said, stiffening. "What's on your mind?"

"How'd you like a little tour of the barbed-wire empire, old man?" He gave me his Lawrence smile and showed me the non-scar side of his face.

"This is conducted?" I said.

"Strictly blue-blood," Proctor said, "Personnel all in the family, marriage, fornication, or straightforward black-mail."

"Proceed at less length," I said.

"Exit Guildenstern and Rosencrantz," said Proctor, "enter the noble-browed Horatio." He smirked. He was cool as mint when you swung at him, but when he swung at you he got excited.

"Suppose you step from behind the arras," I said, to cool him off a little, "and give us all the inside dope. The play's the thing, is that it?"

He took a deep drag on the cigarette. He was never so happy as when you were clubbing him with something.

"Harken, Ophelia," he said. "All steam-heated rooms, about thirty of them, all hand-cooked meals, about fifty of them, all hand-picked guests, about sixty of them, all happy and carefree under portrait of the Master, at stud, hanging over fireplace, with seeded non-Jewish girls anxious to meet and correspond with non-Jewish boys."

"So you're not seeded?"

"I'm not seeded, old man," he said. He did not smile. "But in dreams begin responsibilities, and being something of a dreamer, although unseeded—"

"Spit it up in papa's hand," I said.

"You got to take him home for Christmas, old man."

"Look, Proctor—" I stood up. I hadn't expected anything like that.

"I've already put it to him, old man. The coast is clear."

"Why the hell can't he go by himself?"

"You think I'd trust him alone, old man?" he replied, and the way he said it, the tone of his voice, the way he put his head forward as if to thump with it, made clear what I'd sensed all the time. We had all leaned on Lawrence, but now he was leaning on us. And we were all tied to Lawrence, whether we liked it or not.

"Look, Proctor—" I said, but that was all, and later that evening, his hand still wrapped in the towel, Lawrence stopped by to ask me if I wouldn't like to spend the holidays with him. It would give me a chance to see my mother over New Year's, he said. I said I was sure that would please my mother, especially if Lawrence would stop by with me, and he said he would be glad to, and that was where it was left.

I figured we would drive, but ten days later his grandfather, old Colonel Gans, had a stroke, and Mrs. Lawrence called Charles on the phone and asked us to come by train.

## FOLEY: 9

Lou Baker's voice, hoarse and muffled, spoke to him through the tube.

"Who dat?" she said. An old game.

"Us chickens," he said.

"Foley's chick flew the coop," she said, and then the door buzzed before he could answer. He lunged for it, but too late. It buzzed again. Inside, he propped the bottle in the bucket of sand, still there in case of an air raid, paused to take off his trench coat. The hall was hot. Her apartment was five flights up, on the top floor. The buzzer sounded again, and then he heard, clear at the top, the sound of a hall door opened up—and left ajar. Hearing that sound, Foley was glad he had come.

Near the top of the last flight of stairs he could hear the shower drilling on the curtain. Had they just got up? He stood there a moment, cooling off. The draught through the door smelled of roasting meat. Leg of lamb.

He did not knock on the door but said, "Knock-knock-knock," and the drumming of the shower on the curtain stopped.

"That you, old man?" said the voice, and Foley heard the curtain rings slide on the bar. Through the open bathroom door he got a whiff of the steam-laden air. "Come on in," said the voice, although he hadn't answered, for who but Foley, of all the people they knew, would have nothing to say, nothing really memorable, after all these years?

He stepped into a room that was without carpets, almost bare. On the walls were the shadows where pictures had once hung. A set of springs, without the legs or the frame, covered with material that had once been curtains, sat on the floor in the window corner, boxed in with orange crates. A lamp sat on one. In the other was Lou Baker's

library. A raddled copy of Petit Larousse Illustré, a Webster's Collegiate with the Greek roots in Greek, a copy of Proctor's novel, in her own translation, and a 1921 Sears, Roebuck catalogue. Years ago, twenty maybe, Foley had browsed in the catalogue. He never seemed to tire of the pictures of watches, and spring-wind trains. There was all the raw material, Lou Baker had said, that was needed to write the great American novel—and twenty years ago they were sure she was writing it herself.

"How are you—mon vieux?" the voice went on, adding that last little touch for Foley, who had not been mon vieux, or very much else, for twenty-five years. Through the bathroom door Foley saw the white foot on the tub, and the grape-coloured bruise where a young marksman had shot himself. The foot looked the same, but the leg above it looked thin.

"I'm a little warm," Foley said, and hung his coat in the closet.

"You'll find my wife in the kitchen," the voice continued. "Think she left something burning out there." And Foley was relieved. *That* sounded familiar. Telling you before you thought it what you think.

"I'm glad you found a girl who could cook," Foley said, slipping the bottle from the paper bag. "Most of my old friends had to settle for girls with nothing but jobs."

The feet stepped out of the tub, but they did not come to the door. They remained on the tile floor, facing the mirror, and Foley said, "If you'll excuse me, think I'll step back and present a little hair oil to your wife."

"You'll find her bangs hanging on the towel rack," the voice replied. Seemed to be about the same, Foley thought, and yet— He walked through the door to the room at the back, where two card tables, covered with paper napkins, were set up with candles and places for five. *Five?* "I'll be with you in a moment, old man," the voice put in, as Foley had paused there in the doorway.

"Take your time," Foley said. "I understand the importance of that first impression."

"I made that one earlier," the voice said, and Foley crossed the room toward the kitchenette, a closet-sized hole clouded with smoke from burning meat. He held the bottle out before him, stepped to the door, and saw that she had been waiting there for him, her face carefully smeared with grease and flour for the gravy, her eyes smarting with smoke tears.<sup>9</sup> A dripping fork in her right hand, a potholder in her left, she spread her arms wide, indicating that he should kiss her. He did. Strands of hair were stuck to her sweating brow. Would he wipe the falling hair from her eyes? He did. She turned and poked the meat she had allowed to burn while waiting for him. He stood there, his face set in what he hoped was an expression of admiration, while a very old record dropped on the turntable of his mind. Love's old sweet song. Same old Baker. Same old refrain.

She felt that, turned him around, ran her flour-coated fingers through her hair, then placed the palms of both hands on her bony hips. A characteristic gesture, the fingers arched and spread, as if covered with something sticky, dating from her Montana childhood—dating from a time when they had been. Foley had seen the photograph. The snapshot of a bony little girl standing in a flower patch. The palms of both hands, as if they were dirty, on her bony little hips. "I'd just done it in my pants," she'd explained. "I guess I do it when I'm embarrassed."

Embarrassed, she raised the floured hand, waved it at the room. "We just decided the hell with it," she said and gestured at the tables set up for five people. She meant the hell with their troubles. That was also Lou Baker, dating from way back. "Oh, the hell with it, Foley," she would say in the flat, cigarette voice that seemed to get the most out of a small range of profanity.

Then she coughed, and he said, "Here's the cherry-flavoured phlegm-soother you ordered," and placed the square bottle of Jack Daniel's in her hands. Turning it slowly, she stopped to gaze at the old man himself, a snapshot on the label.



"The old bastard," she said affectionately and wiped a thumb across his face, as if to see him better.

"I suppose you know the rules of the house, old man"—and there he was, in one of Lou Baker's peignoirs, a wet towel looped around his neck. Shaved head bent over, hooked over like a buttonhook at the top. Hunched. From leading, then ducking. Crouch of prizefighter with a violin player's face.

"Right at this point," said Lou Baker, coughing, "he might be curious to hear that this house *has* rules."

That was Lou Baker. That was what a man who had spent a night with her might expect. But it did not touch Proctor. An almost silly smile made a mask of his face.

"The rules of the house, old man," he continued, "are not to put corn on grape, or grape on corn, or pour corn on the uninvited guest." He smiled at Lou Baker. "Madame Swann's Way is serving Médoc tonight, and our distinguished guest, well known for his palate, would vomit down his corset at the thought of corn on grape."

Foley turned to the tables, the five places, and Lou Baker said, "If I'd known that I'd invited some pickled gentiles to a quiet Jewish wake—"

"If you hadn't known," said Proctor, bowing, "there'd have been damn little pleasure in it."

They'll never make it, Foley thought, they're both too goddam clever and independent. "Who is this pickled gentile?" he said, thinking the *right* gentile might help things.

From the kitchen Lou Baker said, "When you called I thought it must be Friday. You never call on anything but Friday. Then when you said anniversary, I got it—"

"You mean, I got it," said Proctor. He had gone back to the bathroom. He began to sing, softly, "'I got five dollars. got two shirts and collars—'"

"So when we got it," Lou Baker said, "I thought what the hell—let's have a party."

"A great idea," said Foley—and waited.

"So I called up Dickie," Lou Baker said and came to-

wards Foley with two whisky glasses, gave him one, walked with the other to the bathroom door. Foley neither sniffed nor studied its colour but tossed it off and felt his eyes water. As the glow spread upward into his chest he said without turning, "So you called up Dickie?"

"He's coming," said Lou Baker. "He's bringing Chateau Lafite and someone else's wife."

Had they both been drunk? Kind of reunion you thought about when drunk. Let bygones be bygones, etc. Why not? Dickie wouldn't let them.

"A very nice corn, old man," said Proctor. "Calls for a very nice grape."

"Well, if we must have a gentile," Foley said.

"It was *his* suggestion," Lou Baker replied.

Where was she? Just standing in the other room. Dialogue between the top and the bottom of the stairs.

"I must say, old man," put in Proctor, "I've been making suggestions for about thirty years. Some of them pleasant. First one she ever took."

"Took another one last night," Lou Baker said, and Foley wondered what man could stand it. Maybe Proctor. Maybe he was just the man for that.

"I know we're crazy, old man," Proctor said, "but I didn't know that *he* was. Think that fooled me. Like to puzzle it out."

"If you want to know the truth," Lou Baker said, "I called him just to shame him. Wealthy socialite and heel seen out whoring with the enemy. Honest to God, I didn't think he had the guts."

From the bathroom Proctor said, "He's got more guts than all of us. He's lived for twenty years on absolutely nothing else."

"If you call *that* guts," said Lou Baker.

"I do," said Proctor. "It takes guts to live on nothing. More guts than I've got. I've got to believe in something, hang on *something*—"

"In case you wonder," Lou Baker said, "he's talking about Richard Olney Livingston, heir to the tin-plate for-

tune and four or five hundred fresh hat-check girls."

"You want to know what I think?" Proctor said.

"No!" cried Lou Baker. "My God, no!"

"I think Dickie would have shot him," Proctor said. "I really do."

"Shot who?" said Foley, his mouth a little dry.

"The Senator, from Wisconsin," Proctor said softly, and Foley could hear him slipping his belt through the loops in his pants.

"You see, Foley," said Lou Baker. "He's *really* crazy. He used to just sound it, but now he's made it. I might as well tell you that's why I love him. I love crazy men."

As if he hadn't heard a word of that, Proctor said, "If I had his guts I'd have shot him myself."

"Will you shut your big mouth?" Lou Baker said. "Will you ever in God's name learn to shut it? You think I want to go back and go through all that again?" She left the front room and swept past Foley, turned the kitchen faucet on.

"I'm just too goddam dialectic, Foley," Proctor said. He came to the door of the bathroom, stood there buttoning his pants. Foley noted easy way he used the thumb and little finger. Pair of tweezers.

"We've got to think," Foley said. "We've got to try and put two and two together—"

"Do we?" said Proctor.

"You see what I mean?" called Lou Baker. "What the hell can you do with him *but* love him?"

A mocking smile on his face, Proctor said, "*Perche vuol mettere le sue idea in ordine?*"

"That sounds like Mussolini," Foley said.

"A smart man," said Proctor.

"And a dead one," said Lou Baker.

"Well, nobody need worry," Proctor said, "about me." He winked at Foley, but the eye behind the lid did not look at him or recognize him, and Foley turned away, already worrying.

"Anyhow," said Lou Baker, changing the subject, "when

he said yes, what the hell could I say? I'd asked him to dinner. I couldn't tell him it was a joke. Then he asked me if he could bring anything, and I said, oh, a bottle or two of Haute-Brion, thinking that might make him see it was a joke. 'Livingston Reserve up country in bomb-cave,' he said. 'How about Chateau Lafite?' "

"Chateau Lafite is all right by me, Lou," Foley said.

"What I mean is—" Lou Baker said, but stopped there. The buzzer was sounding. With the potholder she had picked up Lou Baker walked through the house. While the buzzer sounded she pulled up the front blind, peered down at the street. "Does he think he's going to leave his car parked there?"

"You like to discuss that with him while he's waiting?" Proctor said.

Lou Baker stayed at the window. She tipped her head back for a look at the sky. It crossed Foley's mind, just crossed it, that she might not open the door. She didn't have to. He could still be turned away. What sweeter triumph than to turn him from her door, not answer his bell? But when the buzzer sounded once more she backed from the window, coughed to clear her throat, and faced the speaking tube.

"Dickie?" she said, and they all heard the voice of the man with guts. The playboy who had lived on nothing for twenty years. Then they heard—as though the needle of an old gramophone, the horn missing—the honing voices of a barbershop quartet singing, "The wedding bells are breaking up that old gang of mine."

"Honest to Christ," said Lou Baker, "wouldn't he though!" And they stood there together, facing the door, waiting for him.

What might have happened, Foley wondered, if he had come alone? The woman who stood there, filling the door, a grey-haired, almost massive matron, made it difficult to see the man who stood behind her, her chaperon. He wore a coonskin cap, an eager-beaver expression, carried a sack that rattled with bottles and a tape recorder in an alligator

case. A saddle-leather pistol holster slanted across his flat chest. He gazed at them over the woman's shoulder.

"The man who strikes this woman, I'll shoot like a dog," he said.

The woman laughed first, covering her face with her gloved hands, her head wagging, and Lou Baker threw her arms up, crying, "Dickie, my God!"

"I thought I'd take a few precautions," Dickie said not advancing. "You never know *who* you might run into these days." He rolled his eyes like Groucho, licked his lips, and gave the woman a push.

"You certainly must love him," Lou Baker said, taking the coat and hat the woman was holding, "or maybe you just know him. Maybe you know what to expect."

"I never saw him in my life till one hour ago!" the woman said. It was clear she had been waiting, for that hour, to tell someone. What if the people where they were going were *all* like that? Foley could see that question had been on her mind. "I'm soooo relieved!" she said. "Just coming over here, in that car, I felt so silly—" She looked to see if they understood that. They did. Her tailored suit was grey, and very becoming in spite of the dimensions of her figure. "Wheeeewwww!" she said, not so much from the climb as the close call.

"Where in the world did you find him?" Lou Baker said as Dickie went off with the bottles.

"All I know is, Mrs.—"

"Proctor," said Lou Baker. "This is Mr. Proctor, and this is Peter Foley."

"I'm Mrs. Pierce!" Mrs. Pierce said, blushing. "You wouldn't believe it, but I really am. Married, I mean. And for thirty years!" She threw up her hands.

"Well, you're awfully kind to come to our party, Mrs. Pierce," Lou Baker said.

"*He* said the more the merrier," Mrs. Pierce said, "but I really didn't know—" She questioned their faces.

"We're having a little anniversary," Lou Baker said, but she paused there, wondering what Dickie had told her.

"That's what *he* said, and so far as I can gather"—she smiled at them—"so far as I can gather it's to do with Paris. Is that right?"

"That's right," Lou Baker said, relieved herself. "We were all in Paris just fifty years ago."

"Isn't it the truth?" Mrs. Pierce said. "Just the plain and simple truth?" She looked at Foley as a man who might know.

"It's a long ways back there all right," Foley said.

Dickie came in and said, "Maybe I didn't have one hell of a time!" He turned the coonskin cap so the tail hung in front of his face.

"Oh, I guess we all had a wonderful time, didn't we?" said Mrs. Pierce.

"I mean today," said Dickie.

"Well, I would say that in the past hour—" Mrs. Pierce said and lidded her eyes. That didn't help, so she opened them.

"Now just where *did* you meet?" Lou Baker said.

"I used to be a hostess, honey," Mrs. Pierce said. "I'm still with Air France, and when the news got around about the man who—" She stopped, looked at Dickie, and couldn't go on.

"I'm a boy, but a man at heart," Dickie said and held up his nails, blew on them, then polished them on the tail of the cap.

"I know how you feel, Mrs. Pierce," Lou Baker said.

"About the man who wanted, who said he wanted, a girl who had been in Paris in the twenties. Now if she'd been in Paris in the twenties she was no girl now!" Mrs. Pierce said.

"I didn't say young or old," said Dickie. "Just girl. There's old girls and then there's young girls."

"Well, that was *just* what I got to thinking!" Mrs. Pierce said. "And if that was what he wanted, why, I'd been a girl in Paris myself. I was there chaperoning one of those awful college groups!"

"You'll pardon me," said Dickie, "but Mrs. Proctor is a

prominent Delaware Group alumna. Author of that handy pocket guide 'Sex on Shipboard,' including some harbours, each volume with index to—"

"So you answered the call, Mrs. Pierce?" said Lou Baker.

"I must have been simply out of my mind, but I did! I didn't know at *all* what he wanted, but I said I would speak to him and ask him, and he said all he wanted was a girl who had been there in twenty-nine. In May, he said, of twenty-nine. And you know, I was. I really was. So I said if that was *all* he wanted"—she gave him a look, and he leered—"if that was all he wanted, why, I would be free till half-past ten. There's no train or bus out where we live after eleven. Just joking, I said, Mr. Livingston, what in the *world* will I tell my husband, and he said to say that I'd been out drinking with some refugees. Exiles, I think he said, and refugees!"

"Ha!" Proctor said suddenly and startled all of them. They turned from Mrs. Pierce and looked at him. Foley had a feeling that he had heard it—that Proctor, somewhere, had previously said it—but it had not been Proctor. No, it had been Lawrence. Lawrence in the diner just outside Bakersfield. The night he had not watched his language, argued with the cook in the diner, and later that night, in a lemon grove, had tried to burn his hand in a smudgepot. That had been like Lawrence, but the "Ha" had been out of character.

"Why, Mr. Proctor," Mrs. Pierce said, edging around so the light was behind her, "don't tell me you're the Mr. Proctor all this talk is all about!"

Proctor said nothing. What she said didn't seem to register.

"Mr. Proctor," Dickie said, "is the current public enemy number one. One of two—or is it three?—one of the three surviving Americans. Visitors will please not taunt the exhibit or throw ground glass into the cages."

"Well, I certainly do like your—pluck," Mrs. Pierce said. She had been about to say nerve, but had remembered, just in time, that Proctor was described as a man who suffered

from a failure of it. "Isn't it simply ghastly," Mrs. Pierce said, feeling pluck herself. "I mean, *really*?"

"There's a heartwarming rise in the sale of Mother's Day cards," Dickie said.

Mrs. Pierce gazed at him soberly. "I certainly do admire a man who will stand up to—it."

"You've got the gender right on the head," said Dickie.

"I mean, *really*," she said, "don't you really think so?"

On her upper lip Foley could see the beads of sweat. Keeping a stiff one. Wondering what the hell she had got herself into. Nest of ex-Commies? Bathroom full of C-day bombs, wireless sets, small, laundromat-size brainwasher, and set of Russian folk songs, sung by Cossacks, for broadcasting over Voice of America.

"In spite of the rules of the house," put in Foley, so casually he noticed his hands were shaking, "I suggest a little corn be laid under the grape."

"Let us now milk the Phoenix, poor bird!" cried Dickie and followed Lou Baker out of the room to where the french windows opened on the river view. "Oh, my America!" he cried. "My Harpies Bazaar! Or is it Three-D movies?"

Lou Baker led him off.

"Hasn't it been just a scorcher?" Mrs. Pierce said; then, catching Foley's eye, "I really thought he must be crazy. I really did. I guess we're all mad these days."

"God help all of those who aren't," said Lou Baker. She was back with Dickie and the drinks.

"This itself was their madness," Foley intoned, "'that they would not join Dionysus in his madness.'"

Turning, Proctor said, "Who said that?"

"Something Greek," said Foley. "Forget where I read it."

"It's certainly Greek to me," said Mrs. Pierce and turned to Dickie, who bowed, kissed her hand, then sang:

"Thank ya, fathurr

Thank ya, mothurrrr

Thank ya for meetin' up with one anothurrrr.



Thank the horse that pulled the buggy that night,  
Thank ya both for bein' just a bit tight—"

He took from his pocket a small atomizer, sprayed his throat.

"You folks must be in show business," Mrs. Pierce said and looked at them with admiration.

"You're not far off, lady," said Dickie.

"Do I smell something burning?" Mrs. Pierce wheeled slowly, sniffed the draught from the kitchen.

"Yes, ma'am," said Dickie. With her drink, Lou Baker left. "And now, if I may have your attention," he went on, and screwed his head around, to the left, then the right, like a man about to pass around some dirty postcards. "I have here," he continued, slipping his hand beneath his coat, "a simple cure for the troubles, great and small, that threaten the lives of us vanishing Americans."

Foley waited for him to take from the holster a toy gun. One of those jewelled and flashing weapons that the small fry brandished, then fired, from the rocket ships and bucking broncos in the arcade of every chain store. But Dickie held off a moment, checked the room at his back with a look that was not feigned, then thrust out at them the Colt revolver with which Proctor had shot himself.

"Heavens!" gasped Mrs. Pierce and stepped out of the line of fire.

The gun had been well kept. The barrel and the stock were shiny with oil. Proctor neither stepped forward nor fell back, but his good hand, which held the cigarette, crossed his front and pulled at the lobe of his ear. Foley thought it might be shock. Proctor rocked his head, slowly, as if there might be water in that ear.

From the kitchen Lou Baker called, "We should have gone for a taxi ride. Before we'd eat or drink we'd always ride in a taxi."

Dickie cracked the gun open, blew through the barrel, then snapped it shut. The stunt had not come off. What had he expected? Something positive. Something from

Proctor. But Mrs. Pierce said again, "My heavens!" and Foley said nothing. Proctor stood there silently pulling the lobe of his ear.

"It's an awfully quiet party," Lou Baker said and came to the door of the room with her drink. She saw that Dickie's whisky, untouched, still sat on the plywood tray. But she did not see the gun; he stood with his back to the door. "I see that Mr. Livingston is observing the rules of the house," she said. "Upset stomach?" Dickie slipped the gun back into the holster and reached for his drink, but Lou Baker had caught the movement. "I miss something?" she said.

"Just a few dirty imports for us boys," Foley said.

"Mrs. Pierce," Lou Baker said, moving up, "are they showing you those awful wiggly-part postcards?"

"Boys will be boys, honey," Mrs. Pierce said, seeing in Foley's face that this was not funny. "But nothing you didn't enjoy more thirty years ago!" Mrs. Pierce rolled her eyes, sucked air between her teeth, and let her upper half shake as if she had been tickled.

Coming up fast, Lou Baker said, "Is it charades, or just none of my goddam business?"

"Right the second time," Dickie said and buttoned his coat.

She studied his face, the still young-looking face of an ageing juvenile delinquent, pimpled along the jaw and boyishly clean-cut. She turned from him and looked at Proctor, who dusted his ashes in his empty glass, sprinkled them on his ice cubes, returned the cigarette to his mouth.

"It's the Colt," he said calmly. "You know, the one I shot myself with."

Foley could see Lou Baker stiffen, like a cat, before she relaxed. She watched Proctor stir the cubes in his glass with his finger, then she said casually, "Well, just so it isn't loaded."

"Mal-hurrrr-oooozenfahn," said Dickie matter-of-factly, "that is the case. They don't sell slugs for the old cannon in the pawnshops no more."

"There's two rules of the house," said Lou Baker, turning to Mrs. Pierce, "no corn on grape is one, and all guns have to be turned in at the door."

"I know just how you feel," Mrs. Pierce said, "It's always the empty gun that kills somebody."

The drink he hadn't touched, Dickie raised to his lips and finished off. For the length of time it took him to do that, his Adam's apple pumping up and down, Foley was sure that he would put down the glass, then politely leave. With or without Mrs. Pierce, but with the upper hand, and the gun. He had never been a man to take Lou Baker seriously. It brought up the old question of the Livingston prerogative.

Dickie finished off the whisky, stirred the ice cubes, then, in a strangely detached manner, as if answering traffic questions, he said he would observe the rules of the house. Without removing his coat he unstrapped the holster, pulled the belt from his back, and tossed the outfit on the bed.

"Couldn't we all take a ride in a taxi?" Lou Baker said. She looked at Foley, but he had no money; she looked at Proctor, and he said, "In a taxi on the boulevard Raspail, Dr. Hemingstein professed to be bored."

"Do you realize," Lou Baker said, "almost twenty-five years. What is twenty-five years?" She turned to Mrs. Pierce.

"It's a long time, honey."

"I mean, what do they call it?" Lou Baker said. "When it's twenty-five, what do you call it?"

Mrs. Pierce looked at them sadly, one at a time, then she slowly smiled. "I suppose you mean silver," she said. "It's silver for twenty-five years."

## THE CAPTIVITY: X

When Lawrence and I got back from Indiana we found that Proctor had moved out of the dorm. Lundgren had helped him move over to Hogan's Alley, a collection of shacks where the seniors used to live. Some of the upper-class boys had complained about the noise of his typewriter. Over on Hogan's Alley he could type all night if he wanted to. And he wanted to. He also liked the idea, he said, of being alone.

That left the three of us in the swanky suite of rooms, but we were hardly ever in it together. If we were, Lundgren usually had his door closed. He couldn't stand to hear Lawrence play his phonograph records any more. I didn't mind the records, but I got awfully tired of the showers Lundgren liked to take, sitting on the shower floor and letting the water drum on his back. He took a cold one in the morning and an hour-long hot one every night. Everything in the bathroom was wet with steam and smelled of the olive oil he rubbed down with. After his shower he took about another hour drying off.

As that began to get on my nerves, I did most of my work in the library basement or in the booth behind the radio at the Sugar Bowl. The noise coming out the rear didn't bother me so much.

Both January and February were so foggy that Lawrence and I didn't do much night driving. We would take a little spin in the afternoon, then call it quits. On the weekends we usually drove down to Long Beach, if we were sure Lundgren wouldn't be there, and take in the dance halls along the coast. Neither of us danced, but we liked to sit at the back and watch. The Santa Monica kids had a different style from what you saw at Balboa, or along the strip that Lundgren called the cemetery with lights. That

was how Long Beach looked from the foothills, if you felt about it the way he did, and saw the lights through the oil-field derricks like windmills with their heads blown off.

Once a week I'd go by and see how Proctor was making out. A magazine in the East had paid him thirty-five dollars for a story about a pole vaulter, Lindquist by name, who was always running into the pole. But they had cut the story about half, so the reading time was twelve minutes; the magazine featured a twelve-minute story every month. He showed me the cheque, but he wouldn't let me see what the magazine was.

In February he had a letter from an editor who had read and liked the story and wondered if he might be thinking of something with a little more length. Proctor had about a hundred pages of his novel, but he decided to send the editor just fifty, since he wasn't too sure about the second fifty himself. He thought a great editor might point out something he had overlooked. The editor sent it back with a letter saying that he liked the start of the book very much, especially the fresh quality of the writing, and asked if what Proctor needed was a little ready cash to get on with it. They could let him have a couple hundred dollars if he could indicate, to their satisfaction, just what it was the book was about, and how it would end. But that happened to be what Proctor wanted to know himself. First, just what it was about. Second, just how the hell it should end.

While he was trying to decide we discussed the matter quite a bit. I said I thought he should take the two hundred bucks, naturally. My idea was that he should take the two hundred bucks and go to some place like Santa Fe, or Taos, where he would meet other writers and find a more creative atmosphere. In a place like that he might figure out how to finish the book. But he didn't seem to think so. He seemed to think that Taos was phoney as hell.

Every time I saw him we worked over the same old ground. The real trouble was, in his opinion, that two hundred bucks was not a lot of money when you put it

up against something like the barbed-wire empire. It just so happened, naturally, that there was a mention of an Indiana family, and certain Indiana families might mistakenly think they were the family he meant. And there was also the mention, at considerable length, of a small, swanky college in southern California, but not in just the terms that might please somebody like the dean of men. The dean was not the type, to put it mildly, to understand the processes of creative fiction, and he might be led to think that he was one of the characters in the book. Put up against the sort of squawk that such people might make, two hundred measly bucks was not much dough. Once he got out in the world, on his own, two hundred bucks would not be so much.

In March I didn't see him for a while, because we had our exams. Then we had a big rain, with a foot or so of very fast water in the gutters, and Hogan's Alley was a solid stream of water about ten yards wide. A stream of it lapped under Proctor's shack all night long. He would come to class barefoot, his pants rolled up, the scar showing blue where he had shot himself, and sit in the back of the class, smelling wet and sucking oranges. It was still raining a little the night he came over to see me. He didn't want Lundgren snooping around, so we walked through the rain to the Sugar Bowl, where he said that they had upped their offer to a clean five hundred bucks. What he wanted to know was, where he ought to go to live on it. Where he could write a book and live the longest, that is, on five hundred bucks.

I hadn't given that particular problem much thought. I gave it some, then said that he might try one of the Great Blasket Islands—if what he wanted to be was alone. If being alone wasn't so important he might try Majorca, or Paris, if what he wanted was a more congenial atmosphere. Some writers did. While living in Paris they had written some pretty good books. Proctor said he was delighted to hear me say so, because in his own mind he had thought of Paris, but *everybody* thought of Paris, and he

would hate to end up where everybody was. Then we talked about Capri and Rapallo, where he might run into Ezra Pound, and about St. Cloud, where he just might run into Lawrence. He wasn't sure that he wanted to run into Lawrence, since the book did have a tennis player in it, one from St. Cloud and Indiana, and some people might be led to think it was Lawrence.

We went on in this vein till after midnight, when the Sugar Bowl closed up, then we walked up Hogan's Alley and listened to the radio in his shack. We went through the Guy Lombardo records that he wanted to save, and asked me to keep for him, and a little after four in the morning I got back to the dorm. I came in through the back, under the lemon trees, where Lawrence liked to keep his Bugatti, but the car was gone, and so was the tarpaulin. He was never off by himself at that time of night. I lay awake for an hour or more, waiting for him, then I slept through till late afternoon, when I heard someone fooling around in his room. I thought it must be Lawrence and called to ask him where the hell he'd been. He didn't answer, so I opened the door and saw a uniformed van man, out from L.A., packing everything in his room into shipping crates. The van man cleaned his room out, roped up the crates, then left them there for further instructions; the shipping labels turned up on my desk.

According to Proctor, the trouble was Lundgren; he knew Lawrence couldn't stand him, the mercurochrome between his toes especially. According to Lundgren, Lawrence had been pretty smart. He had decided to leave before the college threw him out.

There was a little of both, in my opinion. Lawrence had not troubled to take his exams, and nobody else had troubled to turn in a set for him. There was that, there was Lundgren, and there was also the fact that he had gone for a ride, and, being alone, it hadn't been necessary for him to come back. He had probably got over as far as Needles, saw Arizona beckoning across the river, and just kept his eye on the white line, following it east. Over in Flagstaff,

having his breakfast, he had probably remembered about his classes, and the Fanny Brice record he had left on his phonograph. He probably worried about that, knowing Lundgren, and called the van man to come out and pack up.

During spring vacation Proctor got a ride as far as El Paso with a Texas junior, and Lundgren decided to put in the time at Jackson Hole. His uncle from Long Beach, the Army colonel, drove him north to Salt Lake City, from where he sent me a postcard with a little bag of salt.

The first three or four days of vacation I spent in bed. I'd get up in the morning and go for the mail, as if I expected something, then come back to bed and read *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. One morning I had a card from Proctor, who said he was sailing from New Orleans, and near the end of vacation I had a card from Lawrence. It showed a bullfighter, named Belmonte, down on one knee in the bullring, staring at the bull. It had been mailed from Spain, was signed Lawrence, and on the back it said :

*This is no bullshit, old man.*

Over the following weekend I packed my books in cartons, which I left in the basement of the dorm, and got off a letter to Mr. Conklin, the Lindbergh man. I said that I was now prepared to take the hop to Paris, or anywhere else. I also wrote a letter to the dean of men, which I planned to mail when I got to Paris, and three days later I heard from Mr. Conklin, Special Delivery. He enclosed a cashier's cheque for five hundred dollars and said he would like to see me later, if I made it.

I put the five hundred into traveller's cheques, applied for a passport, which I arranged to have sent to me in New York, and to put in the time as well as save a little money I bought a bus-trip ticket that would take me through New Orleans on the way.

In New Orleans I wrote a letter to my mother, enclosing a postcard for Arlene Miller, that I mailed in Times Square the night before I sailed. I told them both that I would send them a good assortment of foreign stamps.



## FOLEY: 10

"I think it's cooler back here," Lou Baker said, and as they entered the room, dappled with reflected sunlight, it crossed Foley's mind that there had been no mention of Lawrence. Not once. He stopped, raised his empty glass, and intoned, "'And the sun is unmentioned but his power is amongst us.'"

"Let me give you a refill, old man," said Proctor.

"I like it," said Mrs. Pierce, inhaling the sunset. "Don't you *really* like it?"

"He's like a mole," said Lou Baker. "You wait. The first thing he'll want to do is blow out the candles. Then he'll want to know if the shade on the lamp can't be tipped the other way. Then—"

Peering around quickly, she caught Foley's eye. Nobody listening. Mrs. Pierce had followed the rays of sunset into the bathroom. One thing to say for Baker, Foley thought, without an audience she shut up. Like a clam. Watched her go into the kitchen, poke something.

"Here you are, old man," said Proctor and handed Foley his glass.

Foley placed it on the floor, near the wall, and dropped down on the rumble seat. Seat dated from the summer of '32 when Lou Baker drove Model A coupe to California. Left springs with Foley so she could get into rear of car. Wrecked car near Flagstaff. Dozed off. Blamed it on sudden swirl of dust in the road.

"If anyone had told me," Mrs. Pierce said and stepped out of the bathroom with her jacket off. Moment she set eyes on Foley began to finger the belt line at her waist.

"If anyone had," Dickie said, "you wouldn't have come." He reared back, sucked the air through his nose, and as she stared, fascinated, he flexed the wings of the nostrils.

"Well, now I never—" she began.

"It's nothing," said Dickie, "purely a matter of several thousand years' inbreeding."

Mrs. Pierce made her way around him to the kitchen door. Dickie raised his left arm, balanced the drink on his elbow, then removed a silver case from his pocket, flipped it open, removed a cigarette, lit it with the case lighter, and let the smoke curl from his nose. It rose to cloud the right eye, but he creased his left. *Style*, Foley thought, *Look, Ma, I'm dancin'*, Babe Ruth tapping the dirt from his cleats with bat handle, and summer nights full of swing creaks, citronella, and Magnavox horn strains of Paul Whiteman's music, blowing along the North Shore like the flags on the excursion boats. With Richard Livingston the III, hot from the Charleston, cooling off in the breeze that lapped along the pilings, tickling the palm of the girl in the hipless dress whose hand he held. Apple-cheeked, Arrow-collar, jazz-age playboy, knight at arms but not so palely loitering, blasé with life, breeding, and rumble-seat wit—You know the orange juice song? Now *don't* tell me, let me guess. *Orange juice sorry you made me cry!* And she was. Invariably she was.

"Sauce Livingston," Dickie said, peering into the kitchen, "add pinch of barbital, stir, baste lightly under sunlamp."

Foley looked around for Proctor, saw him between french doors on the balcony. Old man's stance, one flippered hand at the rear, stooped so bad he looked a little arthritic, but scar along jowl not so noticeable. Part of the general erosion. Bedrock seam in his face. And still the limp, the gait with the stutter, small chip, fleck in the record dated Xmas, 1927.

"I really think it's *too* small," Mrs. Pierce said in answer to something she had heard in the kitchen. "Don't you think the world was gotten too small, Mr. Proctor?"

Probably thinks he is lonely, Foley thought. Wants to draw him into party, drain off his sorrows.

"I guess it is a small world, Mrs. Pierce," Proctor said, a

proper smiling answer for children. Way he was stooped, eyes naturally always on the floor. Look of animal *almost* human when he glanced up.

"When the world is so small," Mrs. Pierce continued, feeling that her point had been lost on Proctor, "when it's so small there doesn't seem to be room for a simple difference of opinion—"

"Suppose we leave him out of it," Lou Baker said, coming into the room with a bottle and a corkscrew. She looked at Proctor, but he seemed abstracted, so she turned and gave the tool to Foley.

"I don't think I did mention him—did I?" said Mrs. Pierce and looked to Foley for confirmation.

It was Proctor, however, who said, "He who dreams of a woman and does not lay with her shall be charged with a sin."

"Whether we mention *him* or not," Mrs. Pierce said, holding fast to a practical subject, "I just want to say that Mr. Proctor gave as good as he got."

"I would say he gave sterling for plastic," said Dickie and gave the coonskin hat a quarter turn left.

"That's what I really *meant* to say," Mrs. Pierce replied.

"The kid has brains all right," said Dickie, as if Proctor were not present.

"If everybody had brains like that," said Mrs. Pierce, "there would soon be an end to these investigations."

"Have to hold them in Soldier Field," said Dickie soberly. "Nobody but the baby-sitter home to watch 'em."

Mrs. Pierce got that one. "Do you honestly think so, Mr. Livingston?"

"As I understand it," Dickie said, "the accused is charged—"

"He is not *accused* of anything," Lou Baker said and crossed the room to give Foley the bottle. "He was asked to appear—he was not accused."

"As I understand it," Dickie continued, "the charge is that the witness has brains. He has brains. Ergo, he is guilty. Am I not right, Professor Foley?"

"Right," said Foley, put the bottle on the floor, and studied the mechanism of the corkscrew. It resembled, he seemed to remember, something he had once seen for impregnating horses. Mares, that is. " 'Hecho en Méjico,' " he read off the handle, and the sound of the words, the pause they fell into, suddenly made him think of tortillas, frijoles, and the sad nasal voices of the trio at the La Golondrina, on Olvera Street.

"From Taxco," said Lou Baker. "Isn't it marvellous?"

Also from Taxco, Foley remembered, was the crate, a little larger than a doghouse, made of sticks bound together with rawhide thongs, containing eight broken plates and a piece of wood described on the sales sheet as a spoon. This was followed by a letter in which Lou Baker said that she was now taking up residence in Taxco, where Rafael Torres—a Latin lover with obsidian eyes and uncomplicated passions—had opened up for her a *vita nova*, as she said. *What you won't understand*, she said, *is that it's free of all the goddam complications*—and, she might have added, free of everything else after about six weeks. Her next card—a week before Christmas—re-established her residence in New York.

"Like papa show you how it works?" Dickie said and took the corkscrew out of his hand.

"He's not *hecho* in the right place," said Lou Baker. "Hecho en Chicago. Sounds like a tango."

"You know what Bryan says?" said Mrs. Pierce. "Bryan is my husband, and if I've heard him say it once, I've heard him say it ten thousand times." Mrs. Pierce paused, and just a fleck of saliva showed at the corners of her mouth. "He says the dumb ones shoot you, and the smart ones shoot themselves."

With an effort that brought the sweat to his forehead Foley drew on the cork, heard the pop fill the hollow. "Voilà!" he said and held the cork up in triumph.

"Put it back and do it right," said Lou Baker. "Your face is all red. You didn't follow directions. Directions say pulls any cork without effort."

She stared at Foley, her lips parted, her eyes shouting, *Say something. For Christ's sake, can't you say something!*

"If someone will kindly present me with a decanter," Foley said, "I will decant." He held the bottle to the light, rocked it slightly, then sniffed the cork. "There was a mouse in the cask."

"What you say, madame," said Dickie, turning to Mrs. Pierce, "interests me very much."

"Well, I know it interests Bryan," Mrs. Pierce said. "He says there's hardly a week that somebody doesn't—"

"I'm awfully sorry," Lou Baker said, "to break up this very interesting discussion, but—"

"Seen objectively," Proctor said, very calmly, "I'm afraid your husband is right."

"I don't see it objectively," said Lou Baker, "I don't find it interesting, and I don't choose to discuss it. Shall we eat?" She turned to the tables and lit the candles. On Dickie's juvenile face Foley saw the unsettling delinquent smile. Mrs. Pierce wagged her head from side to side, a woman accustomed to the arguments of children.

"Just what do you propose to do about it, Mrs. Schweitzer?" Dickie said.

Foley thought that would do it, that would end it, and he pushed up to do what he could, but Lou Baker was still lighting candles, the flames warm on her face. The hand that held the match seemed steadier than usual.

"Serve the lamb hot, the consommé cold, and the wine at room temperature, dear." Then she turned to them all and said, "Well, let's eat."

"If I may interrupt the panel at this point," said Dickie, sliding the chair under Mrs. Pierce, "to bring you an announcement from Sweet-Bark Dog Food. Mrs. Ida Whiff, of Ridley Park, writes, 'We had a little dog with a very bad breath till we began to cheat him with Smell-Gawn Puppy Pampers.' End quote. Stop evading your dog's friendly lick. He won't tell you, but we will. Pamper your pet with Sweet-Bark's Smell-Gawn—"

"All I wish is that Bryan was here," said Mrs. Pierce.

"Sweek-Bark thanks Mrs. Whiff just loads for her letter, and now we return you to our five-star panel featuring Victor, the mutt with all the answers. Now Victor—"

"I see a paw raised," Lou Baker said. "One of the mutts in the audience would like to ask a question."

"Sweet-bark right up," Dickie said.

Proctor moved the candle several inches to the left, so that he could look at Foley, and said, "What would you say it was, old man?"

"What?" asked Foley.

"The good society?" said Proctor.

"If you mean the goods society," said Dickie, "we have it. What'll it be, dry goods or wet goods?"

Lear's fool, Foley thought, a dog must to kennel: whipped out when lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

"Sweet as nature's own armpits," Dickie said. "Millions of satisfied foul-mouthed users. Ask for Smell-Gawn, yours for three dated carton tops."

"I could tell you something, but I'm not going to," said Mrs. Pierce. They looked at her, and she pressed the paper napkin to her face. It came away wet. "I almost forgot that wine was so warming," she said. "Oh my—"

"We're on the air now, madame," Dickie said, "Sweet-Bark's gold dust is running out of the hour glass—"

"You wouldn't believe it if I told you!" Mrs. Pierce cried, and a series of tremors, in waves, shook her shoulders. She opened the damp paper napkin, pressed it to her face.

"We wouldn't believe what, Mrs. Pierce?" Lou Baker said, and Mrs. Pierce reared back, like a seal out of the water, blurted out, "Tiny—he called me Tiny!" and dropped her head down below the table level, a seal submerged. A bone hairpin fell from her loosening hair to the floor, and they watched the back of her neck discolour.

"He? Who?" Lou Baker asked, as if that might explain it.

"Bryan," muttered Mrs. Pierce through her wadded

paper napkin. "Oh dear me, the poor darling!"

"I guess we've all changed, Mrs. Pierce," Lou Baker said and fingered the stem of her wineglass.

"What you wouldn't believe," Mrs. Pierce cried, "is that I've got smaller. Back then I was bigger!" and threw up her arms, rocking back on the folding chair. It gave way without a snap, without a sound, except for the gasp she made in going over, and the rattle of the silver and plates on the table she raised in the air. Foley held the table, Dickie went to the aid of Mrs. Pierce. Thanks to the car seat, on the floor behind her, she was not hurt. She remained there, propped upright in her corset, her head lolling on her shoulders, while Lou Baker wiped the tears of laughter from her face. Weaving like a prizefighter's handler, Dickie fanned the air above her with the small potholder.

"In this corner," he chanted, "Tiny Pierce, tipping the scales at—well, having tipped them—being expertly handled by Montana Lou Baker, ex-paperweight champ, Bryn Mawr twenty-five."

Lou Baker said, "Bryn Mawr twenty-seven."

"Still a master of the little white lie," said Dickie. He looked around sadly, spotted Proctor, and said, "We will now hear a word from one-shot Lasky—"

Foley was sure that they wouldn't, but Proctor began, "I'd say the good society—"

"Oh, my God!" said Lou Baker.

"That's right," said Dickie, "plus all denominations, races, creeds, colours, notions, and Senator McCarthy Everyman a superman among equally supermen, so there's no hurt feelings."

"Are you a Princeton boy too?" Mrs. Pierce said, peering around Dickie's legs for a look at Proctor.

"No, ma'am," said Proctor soberly, "but I was gored by a Princeton bull. I have a lovely cornada, with Old Nassau licence plates."

Lou Baker raised her hand as if to fend off something she saw approaching, then turned the palm inward and drew

it slowly down her face. From the pack on the table, not from his case. Dickie took a cigarette, lit it with the candle. When he sucked in the smoke his boyish face had a withered look.

"I have never been so flattered, Mrs. Pierce," he said. "Cornada Livingston. I like the ring of it." He let the smoke hang in a cloud around his head.

"I'm ashamed to bring it up," Tiny Pierce said, "but I—"

"That's part of the cornada charm," said Lou Baker. "If you don't know what it is it is very much better. Professor Foley thought it was an Italian sporting car."

Drawing the fire, Foley said, "I'd heard that Lawrence had hurt himself, so I naturally thought—"

"Lawrence?" said Mrs. Pierce.

"Not *the* Lawrence," said Foley.

"I beg your pardon, old man," said Proctor, "*the* Lawrence."

"Charles Lawrence," continued Foley, "young tennis player. If you followed tennis back then you might remember—"

"Didn't he shoot himself—or someone?" said Mrs. Pierce. She looked around the table at them. "Wasn't it in the papers?"

"Lawrence had a bad horn wound," Lou Baker said, speaking slowly, with elaborate care. "He couldn't stand to be ill. He simply couldn't stand to—"

"This cornada?" said Mrs. Pierce, "you haven't told me—" She turned to look at Dickie, who said, "Mr. Proctor, madame, is the world authority on bulls, and their droppings. He is the author of the widely unread droppings classic, now out of print."

Mrs. Pierce turned to Proctor, who said, "The cornada, madame, is a blow below the belt. When it is made by the horn, it is said to be lovely; the man does not like it, but the bull loves it. When it is made by college boys—"

"The bull, madame," said Dickie, "evacuates. The college boy White Wings swoop down to collect it, analyze it, but



come to no conclusions."

Wetting his fingers on his lips, Proctor leaned over and snuffed out one of the candles. "Cornada Livingston's analysis," he said quietly, "is correct. He should have written the book. If he had written the book it would still be in print."

Beyond the candle Foley saw Dickie's sweating face. The coonskin hat made him look like a frontier doll. One that would sweat and make water when the frontier dangers appeared.

"I can't really say," Foley began, "that the spectacle—" He wiped his face with his napkin.

"You mean the poor horses?" said Mrs. Pierce, then added, "Do I smell coffee?"

"I'll get it," said Lou Baker, and Mrs. Pierce went on, "Don't you think it was the age? Weren't we all a bit crazy?"

"A bit," said Proctor, "is not crazy enough."

"When I think," said Mrs. Pierce, thinking, "I think we were all too idealistic."

"Is it idealistic to shoot sitting ducks?" Proctor replied.

"Sitting?" said Mrs. Pierce, getting the picture. "Isn't it idealistic for them to be *sitting*?"

"Madame," said Dickie, leaning forward, "would you please repeat that statement?"

"What did I say?" said Mrs. Pierce. She looked around. "I don't know *when* I've been so warm—"

"Maybe if we left the door open," Proctor put in, got up from the table, and left the room. They heard him open the door, step into the bathroom on his way back.

"What clever thing did I say?" said Dickie. "You think I've given him the last chapter."

"Once I read a true story," Lou Baker began, "of a man who sent his friends live kittens in shoe boxes. He put fresh lilies in the box with them, and enclosed a card saying, 'Please bury this coffin.'"

"Good heavens!" said Mrs. Pierce, half out of her chair, and dropped down again.

"I thought the story was phoney," Lou Baker said. "I didn't believe there were people like that."

"And now you do, dear?" Dickie said.

"I believe in evil," Lou Baker said.

"Of course there's evil," Mrs. Pierce said, rising suddenly, for a rebuttal. "Of course there's evil, but there's every bit as much good. If I could just tell you the things people do—unselfish things, just out of pleasure in goodness—"

"I didn't say there were not good people," said Lou Baker. "I just said that I believed in evil. Just like I believe that the sun does not go around the earth. It is a *fact*. It is more a fact than anything else. I guess I fear it because I *believe* in it."

"Infantile paralysis," said Mrs. Pierce, "is certainly a *fact*. I have a niece in Stamford—but just because it's a fact is no reason to believe in it."

"I think I see your point," Foley said, noting the rise and fall of Mrs. Pierce's bosom, the steady, remote serenity of Lou Baker's gaze. "I see your point. I think the modern error has been in the ignoring of the power of evil, treating it as a childish superstition, or worse. Confusing it with sin. On the other hand—" He stopped when he saw Lou Baker's gaunt head wagging slowly back and forth, as if her ears were ringing. Foley agreed. What was he saying? Words, words, words—

"Goodness," Mrs. Pierce said—and for a moment Foley waited for her to say "gracious," but no, she meant "*goodness*"—"is every bit as real."

"It's a very pretty picture," Lou Baker said, "and even cheaper than books on flower arrangement, but it is not something"—she squeezed her small fists together—"in which your guts can believe." Mrs. Pierce stared at her, fascinated. "Why are men of good will," Lou Baker said, "all over the world, good for nothing? Why do men of evil rule the world?"

"I don't for one single moment think they do," said Mrs. Pierce. "I don't for one moment heed the counsel of despair."

"I know," said Lou Baker. "That's what I'm pointing out."

Mrs. Pierce turned to Foley, who said, "People of good will are often blind to the facts. Now take Hitler. In the early thirties—"

"Oh, to hell with Hitler!" Lou Baker cried. "To hell with Mussolini, with Stalin, with Beria! To hell even with McCarthy! Let's take me and you." When Foley leaned back she said, "Let's take me then. Am I a force for good or evil?"

"I'd say we're all a little of both," said Foley.

"You lie!" said Lou Baker. "You know that you lie! And when you lie you are a force for evil!" Her right arm waved in the air, flapping the towel she held like a broken wing.

"Children! Children!" Mrs. Pierce cried, but there she stopped, and Foley thought the roar that filled the room had been too much for her. Her jaw hung slack, the blood drained from her face, and on the no longer panting bosom Foley expected to see the sudden, spurting pump of blood.

"Oh, my God!" Lou Baker said, and on her way out of the room, towards the explosion, she left the towel looped over the arm that Mrs. Pierce, still breathing, had raised to stop her.

## THE CAPTIVITY: XI

I spent a week around New York looking for the cattle boats that Richard Halliburton always sailed on, then I booked passage on a Diamond Lines freighter, the *Black Gull*. I had a lower berth, under the portholes and a Swedish artist named Larsen, who sat in his berth strumming a guitar most of the time. We had a Cincinnati janitor, Otto Klug, in the lower berth on the inside, and a Chase Bank clerk named Ruhig in the upper, who was sick all the way.

On the twelfth day out we saw Land's End, then we spent two full days going up the Channel, the smell of the engines in the cabin and the foghorn blowing day and night. We docked in Antwerp the following morning, about three o'clock. The tide was in, and the deck of the boat was high above the street. When the gangplank went down we could hear all the windows facing the dock go up or come down, and then the hooting of the women, but in the fog we couldn't see anything. They emptied their nightpots over the sidewalks as we passed. We sat around in a beer hall until morning, when we could get through the customs, then I went along with Larsen and Otto Klug to the American Express. Larsen bought a third-class ticket to Riga, Klug bought one to Spitz, which was near Vienna, and I bought one on the night train to Paris, to save paying for a room. Then we broke up, as we had seen a lot of one another on the boat.

I mailed a card of the cathedral to Arlene Miller, saying that Antwerp was all that I had expected, and one to my mother saying that I had arrived but the passage had been rough. Then I had a look at the cathedral, the Descent from the Cross as painted by Rubens, and several cafés au lait in an American-style restaurant on the avenue du Commerce.

In the afternoon I went to the Zoo, to keep from running into Otto Klug and Larsen, then I took in a movie until it was time for the Paris train. Emil Ruhig turned up on the train, where he offered me a seat in his compartment, but I said that on European-style trains I liked to stand in the aisle. I stood in the aisle from Antwerp to Paris, and near Paris, early in the morning, I took a live goose through the window and held him till the old woman boarded the train.

We pulled into the Gare St. Lazare about seven o'clock. Coming over on the boat, I'd studied Paris on the maps in my Baedeker, and when I got out of the station I headed down the rue Auber to the American Express.

Three letters and a postcard were waiting for me. One from Troy, Indiana, enclosing an invitation to the wedding of Lawrence and Miss Pamela Crowley, to take place on the 5th of June, in St. Cloud. One from Proctor, forwarded from California, saying that Lawrence had been injured in a novillada, and one from Arlene Miller, giving me a list of the stamps she would like. The postcard was from my mother, who said that she couldn't say she was really surprised.

I couldn't find "novillada" in my pocket Larousse, so I figured it must be some sort of sportscar, like the Bugatti, only very likely more powerful. We all took it for granted he would kill himself in one someday. I left a note for Proctor at the American Express, saying that I was on my way to Majorca, but I hoped to find the time to look him up before I left. Then I had a café noir at the Café de la Paix, walked down the rue de la Paix to the Tuileries, sat there for a while, then crossed the Pont des Arts to the Left Bank. I went along the quai to the Boul' Mich', where I had a café au lait and a croissant, then I looked at Notre Dame and walked up the Boul' Mich' to the Luxembourg. I had the address of a *pension* on rue Gobineau, but it was spring, I was in Paris, and when the kids around the pond yelled "Me voici," I turned and looked. They pronounced it as Mrs. Josephine had said they would.

In the afternoon I took a room at the *pension*. I had a

shower, then I thought I'd take a nap, since I'd been on my feet all night, but some American girls were playing ping-pong down the hall. They didn't play very well, and the ball would roll down and ping on my door. The place was full of girls, and one from Wellesley had just moved out of the room I was in, leaving her fingernail polish and four or five bobby pins in the bed.

I got up around six, walked up Raspail to the American club. Some more American girls were having tea, playing records on a portable phonograph, and dancing that open stance way that girls like to dance. A couple of young men with beards were playing chess and smoking pipes. On some of the stationery the club provided I got off a short note to Lundgren, telling him that the Left Bank was lousy with Americans and phoney as hell. Then I walked up to Montparnasse, where I bought a pack of Caporal Jaunes and had a café noir out in front of the Dôme, where the writers hung out. I had a café au lait inside the Coupole, where I read the sports in the *Paris Herald*, then I crossed the street and leaned on the railing at the Métro stop. Three old men were playing sad, whiny music that people seemed to like. I was smoking, listening to the music, when I noticed the English conversation that was going on on the steps of the Métro stop. Both girls were tall, but one had her hair in heavy braids, like the tails of saddle horses, and the other one, a blonde, had it more like Garbo, brushed back. She wore a turtleneck sweater, and it made you think of Garbo right off. They had a man along with them, right between them, and although I couldn't see his face, just the back of his head, I knew that I had seen him somewhere before. I wasn't sure where until he turned, as if he felt me looking at him, and I saw he was the fellow in the leering photograph on Lawrence's desk. He leered at me just the same, as if he still had that French nude in his lap.

He led the girls across the street to a table at the Dôme, clacked a pair of castanets to attract the waiters, and ordered a vermouth cassis for the girls and an amer picon for himself. He called them chicks, and they called him

Honey, Bunny, Dickie, and dear. I took a table back under the awning, ordered an amer picon myself, and watched the girl with braids play around with the tips of her gloves. She had a way of showing the tip of her tongue when she talked. I was putting her down as a piece from Goucher, the one who had written some of Lawrence's papers, when she turned to this Dickie and said, "Bunny, you like to take the rap for me?"

"Love it, chick," he said, swapped places with her, then he looked around to see what was the trouble, saw it was me, and came back to my table. He leaned forward on it and said, "Livingston speaking. Would it be Stanley?"

"No, it would be Foley," I said, and let him figure it out.

He did all right, then he said, "I got an extra chick on my hands, old boy. Don't let the slouch fool you. Montana born aus Bryn Mawr chick." That one was Lou Baker, the Garbo type, and the other one was Pamela Crowley. They didn't care for each other particularly. After we were introduced and had a few drinks he asked me to take one of them off his hands.

"I got to feed these chicks, old boy," he said, "but they won't slobber out of the same trough. Montana Lou doesn't seem to like the upperclass type of bitch." I said I wasn't much for that type of bitch myself. "Well, she's all yours," he said, meaning Montana Lou Baker, and slipped me three hundred francs to feed her.

We went over through the Luxembourg to the Café d'Harcourt, on the Boul' Mich'. I spent about a hundred forty on her there, then we had our café noir at the Deux Magots. Just in passing I asked her what she was doing with a Boy Scout like Dickie, and she said he was paying her and a Frenchy to translate a novel. I asked her what novel, and she said the poor boob called it "Querencia," which you couldn't translate, but meant the place in the ring where the bull felt at home. Then I asked her what the name of this poor boob was, and she said Proctor, Jesse L.

I said I knew certain people who knew him, and she said

he was a boob but a talented writer, and it had been something of an education to work on his book. Was it finished? I asked. No, he hadn't finished it. He would never finish it, in her opinion, and she would very likely never finish the translation, since she hadn't seen any of it for several weeks. For all she knew, Dickie might be finishing it himself. I asked her what the trouble seemed to be, and she said Proctor couldn't make up his mind whether to save the hero in the book or kill him off. The book called for killing him off, since the hero had become a bullfighter, but this would leave the author without a querencia himself. He knew that. That was why he couldn't finish it. He was one of these poor boobs who were looking for the great good place, a bullring without bulls, and he would probably end up in the Party or the Church.

"In the Party?" I said—the only Party I knew at the time was the Democratic. But she didn't go on.

"The poor damn boob," she said for no particular reason, then she looked at me and asked, "Am I especially unattractive?"

"You consider Garbo unattractive?" I said.

"You mind answering my question?"

"In my opinion you're a very pretty girl."

"That's my opinion too," she said, "but in more than three weeks he never once kissed me." I looked at her, and she added, "I mean he never even tried to kiss me."

"Who?" I said, thinking she meant Dickie.

"This awful damn Brooklyn boob."

"I thought I knew him," I said, "but I didn't know he was crazy."

"I wouldn't kiss him now if he paid me," she said and put her hand in my raincoat pocket. I don't know whether she knew that mine was there or not. Most of the time we just walked, or stood on the bridges where we could watch the reflections on the water, or sit on the Right Bank and look at the lights over on the Left. Toward morning we walked up the Champs Elysées to a covered bus stop on the avenue Hoche, where she sat in my lap curled up in her



camel's-hair coat. I thought she had forgotten all about Proctor, when she brought him up. She began to quote him, and we had something of a little argument. It ended up with my trying to kiss her, and her almost biting the tongue out of my mouth. Then I chased her up the street, and she slammed the door of her *pension*.

I walked back through Paris to the Tuileries. I watched the sun rise on the Eiffel Tower and sat around until the bookstalls opened; then I crossed the river to the Left Bank and had a croissant at the Dôme. I studied one of the maps at the Métro station till I found Proctor's place. He was in a small hotel, Lou Baker had hinted, on rue Duguesclin. It was not much of a street, as it turned out, but some acrobats were showing off on the corner, and most of the people on the street had stuck their heads out the windows to watch. One of them wore a turtleneck sweater, his hair clipped like a monk, and rimless glasses that he had raised to look at the street. He was thinner, and the barbed-wire scar was like a crack in his beard.

"How are you, Proctor?" I said.

"Christ!" he said, as he had in Chicago, put the pipe he was holding in his mouth, gave a wet suck on it. "Foley, old man, you old bastard, how are you?"

I said I was fine, considering that I'd gone several nights without sleep. I may have looked it, because he didn't question the point. But I had given him such a start I didn't know if he was glad to see me or not; he always needed time to figure out what it was he felt. He figured it out and said, "You like to come up, old man?"

I looked at my watch, as if I might be rushed, but it had stopped at three-fifteen that morning. That was just about the time Lou Baker had clamped down on my tongue.

"I'm here on the landing, old man," he said and pulled his head out of the window to point behind him. Then he left the window, and I heard him open the door on the stairs. The Hotel Duguesclin was five floors high but not much wider than a streetcar. "This is quite a surprise, *mon vieux*," he said and stepped out of his room so I could step

in. The end of the bed partially blocked the door. Near the window was a table, a chair without a back, one of Lawrence's bags covered with Dollar Line stickers, and a paper bag that had just been crumpled up and thrown aside. On the table was his typewriter, several pipes, a pint-size carton with a wire handle, and a loaf of whole wheat bread with the word HOVIS stamped on it. A Boy Scout knife was sticking up in the bread.

"I was just about to dine, old man," he said, "but I suppose my simple fare—" He waved his hand at the table.

I said thanks very much but I was right now on my way to eat. Some old Chicago friends had asked me to dine at the Deux Magots with them. I could see that he'd taken the bread out of the bag and sunk the knife into it in quite a hurry, for the bag kept crackling as it slowly opened up.

"Don't have the money to waste myself, old man," he said and opened up the flap of the carton, sawed off a slice of bread and spread a thick layer of sour cream on it. He took a big bite and said, "Never felt better in my life."

"Well, you're looking pretty good," I said, and he was. The beard suited him all right, but he looked more like a rabbi than a writer. It made his jaw seem squarer, and the point of the beard stuck out.

He swallowed down what he had, then said, "What brings you to Elsinore, old man?"

"I guess I felt like a change," I said.

He put the bread down, wiped his mouth, and I thought he was going to ask me about it. But he got control of himself, said, "Christ, what a hole!"

"Colton's not the place it used to be," I said.

"My God, man," he said, "but we were young at the time!" He stopped eating and began to fill his pipe.

"Don't let me keep you from eating," I said.

"I never eat much at one time," he said and tossed me his tobacco pouch. I took out my own pipe, filled it, and he tossed me a box of French matches. Lighting my pipe, I could hear the music across the street.

"You've got a nice place here," I said.

"It grows on you, old man," he said.

We let it grow on us, then he said, "You just get here?"

"I put in some time in Antwerp first," I said.

"Be sure you see the glass at Chartres before you leave, old man."

"I don't have too much time for France," I said. "I want to get into Spain. Brush up on my Spanish." We smoked awhile, then I said, "It's a small world, n'est-ce pas?"

"Too small," he said. To make sure I got that he said, "Fellow from Cornell, a painter, ran into his mother's brother down in Vian's men's room."

"My only uncle is in Melbourne, old man," I said and leaned back so I could get a look at the street. Down on the corner the acrobats were gone. But across the street, on our level, a woman with bright yellow hair stood on the balcony, between two french doors, combing it. The street was so narrow that I could see her hair was dark at the roots. It made me think of Proctor's room in Chicago, but in Paris it would not be necessary to rap a brush on the window or sit in a room with drawn blinds.

"What were you saying, old man?" he said.

"You remember Dickie?" I said. He did. "I had an awful piece of luck," I said. "Ran right into him at the Dôme."

"Well, whatayaknow."

"Recognized him from the photograph," I said. "Same leer on his puss."

"Alone?" said Proctor.

"No," I said, tapping my pipe on the floor. "He was there with two babes."

"HMMMMM."

"Had this pair of skirts on his hands," I said, "so he passed the Garbo number off on me. Bryn Mawr piece. You know how they are at Bryn Mawr."

"They are persistent," Proctor said.

"Upshot of it was," I said, "he gave me the babe and key to his apartment. Said he had an extra bed, since Lawrence wasn't in it—"

"Well, wasn't that nice of him," said Proctor and took

the knife from the bread, cleaned his pipe bowl with it.

"What's Lawrence up to—now?" I said.

"It is not good," said Proctor.

"He got himself a little gored?"

"A cornada," said Proctor. He placed his hand at his groin, rubbed the spot softly. "Very good for the bull. Very bad for Lawrence."

"He must be crazy as hell," I said.

Proctor filled his pipe again. "He is not crazy."

"If he isn't," I said, "you name it."

"I am working on it now, old man."

"He's got everything to live for," I said. "He's got everything anybody could ask for, and what does he do? He runs around trying to get himself killed."

"He was trying to kill the bull, old man," said Proctor.

"It adds up to the same thing," I said. "If what he wants to do is kill the bull, why the hell not get a gun and shoot it? Easier for him, easier on the bull."

"Is it a touchdown, old man," Proctor began, "if you take the football, say, around midnight, and go out on the empty field and put it between the goalposts?" I let it pass. "Is it a touchdown," he went on, "or is it only a touchdown if you follow the rules? There are rules for football, and there are rules for killing the bull. Football is for children, killing the bull is for men."

I could tell the way he said it that he had put it in his book, word for word.

"To quote an old friend of mine," I said, "that's bullshit."

"Let us talk about something you understand," he said and tossed me his tobacco. He was very calm. I was not calm, so he said, "Did you have a nice passage?"

"How's the bullsh—I mean, book, coming?" I said.

"Pretty good, old man," he said and looked at the sheet of paper in his typewriter. "I got it all but the clincher. I can't kill him off."

"Why don't you let the bull do that?"

Without turning to me he said, "Old man, I guess I'm superstitious."

I didn't kid him. I could see that he was. He looked at the sheet he had in the machine, tore it out with a zip, crumpled it in his hand.

"Okay," I said, "he kills the goddam bull and lives happily ever after."

"There's a bull in this book, old man," he said, "but he's a nice bull. He don't shit in the bullring." I laughed at that, but he didn't. "I can't see him doing it, old man," he said.

"Doing what?"

"Living happily ever after *anything*, old man."

I couldn't either, once I thought about it. To live happily ever after you have to retire. Lawrence couldn't retire

"Just *who* the hell's book is it?" I said.

"I don't know, by God!" he said. "Maybe it's his." He thought that over, then he said, "If it's his book, and I kill him off in it—"

"I see," I said, although I didn't.

"But my agent thinks that I ought to."

"You've got an agent?"

"Not an agent strictly speaking, old man. But when he saw it, said I ought to have an agent, and when he volunteered his services—"

"HMMMM," I said.

"Was his idea," Proctor went on, "bring it out in French first. Small, signed edition. Bring it out here first, then when the talk gets around, when the word gets around—"

"Who's doing the translating?"

"Girl with stars in her eyes, old man. Highly admires my stuff."

"She want you to kill him off or save him?"

"You know," Proctor said, "can't get her to say. Think she's probably little squeamish about it." He leaned forward, put his pipe on the table, and took a sheet of yellow paper from the pile on the floor. He rolled it into place and typed a number on the right-hand corner. "Three hundred and twenty-one," he said. "Been there all week."

"I better run along and let you get to work," I said.

"Say you were writing the book, old man?" he said.

I thought it over. "How about just goring him so damn bad he can't fight any more, but he can write a book about it?"

He sat there facing the window as if he hadn't heard me. When I turned I saw the woman with the yellow hair pouring wine from the bottle in the wicker wrapping into the glass of a man who sat across from her, a red fez on his head. He was black, not a sooty black, but more like the colour of oil smeared on water, or like the blackbirds I had seen under the college sprinklers, worming the grass.

"He'd never try anything so easy," Proctor said, and for a moment I wondered if he meant the woman. If he meant Lawrence and any woman.

"Is the wedding still on schedule?" I said.

"It's a toss-up, old man, whether I kill him off first or she gets him."

"If she wants him," I said, "I put my money on her." He didn't reply to that, so I got up to leave. "I got a chick from Chicago waiting for me at the Dôme," I said.

"The place is going to hell, old man," he said and stepped out in the hall so I could get out. The window on the stairs looked out on the Cimetière du Montparnasse. Three American girls, one in a dirty slicker, were bent over trying to read what it said on one of the stones.

"I'm thinking strongly of Majorca," I said. "You hear anything from Majorca?"

"They're in Majorca too, old man. They're all over hell. They're even in Russia."

"You hear from Russia?" I said.

"I am in close touch, old man."

When I looked at him he gave me that Lawrence smile.

"Well, vaya con dios," I said and went down the stairs, made the turn at the street, and went off as if I were late for this chick at the Dôme. On the corner where the acrobats had been I stopped to light up a Caporal Jaune.

## FOLEY: I I

Proctor stood facing them, the smoking gun in his hand, a look of bemused astonishment on his face, gazing at the finger-size hole in the ceiling of the room. From the hole, as from a cracked hour-glass, a powdered dust sifted to the floor.

"Well, I'd say his aim has improved some," Dickie said and made a soft clucking sound, like a chicken.

"You fool!" cried Lou Baker. "You awful fool!" and ran forward and buried her head in his shoulder. He let the Colt hang slack while he absently stroked the back of her neck.

Foley said nothing. His tongue and the roof of his mouth were dry. He gazed, as they all did, at the hole in the ceiling, then he lowered his eyes to a spot on the floor.

Someone below was tapping. Without raising her head, her arms tight around Proctor, Lou Baker rapped a loose mule heel on the floor. The tapping stopped.

"What'll we tell the cops?" Dickie said matter-of-factly. "Cleaning old firearm for homecoming weekend?"

Lou Baker suddenly turned. "You brought it here. Suppose you tell them. You brought it here and you knew it was loaded!"

"I swear to God!" Dickie said, holding up his right hand.

"You swear to *who*?" Lou Baker said, "*Who*?" She looked around at them wildly. "I swear I'm going to lose my mind!"

"I swear," said Dickie. "I just swear I didn't know it. The thing looked full of holes." He twirled his fingers to indicate the chamber. "I swear—" he said again, then stopped.

"Go on!" said Lou Baker. "Christ, I'm really curious. I'm just dying to know what the hell it is you'll swear to!"

"Easy, baby," Proctor said, "take it easy now, baby," but

when his hand touched her shoulder she spun around and hit him. Not hard, just slapped him with a wild fling of her arm; then, seeing what she had done, she threw her arms around him, sobbing.

"Why don't you and I," Mrs. Pierce said, tapping Foley on the arm, "go and do those dishes?"

Foley turned and followed her into the room at the back. Dickie came along, he tagged along, that is, so close on Foley's heels that he stepped on the right one, said, "Excuse me!"—blurting it out like an overgrown kid. Then he hurried past them both into the kitchen, splashed water on his face. Something about that—nearly everything about it—the sounds he made blowing into the water, made it all seem like the foolish prank of some kid. A big, awkward kid caught fooling with a gun. Foley felt, as he hadn't for years, just the slightest twinge of affection for Dickie, the middle-aged delinquent without a Bible to swear on.

"We can just thank the Lord," Mrs. Pierce said, "that something terrible didn't happen."

"Yes, ma'am," Dickie said. He did not mean to be amusing. It was what he meant. Foley was thinking that the only time Dickie sounded phoney was when he was serious, when it was perfectly clear that he was swearing on whatever it was he had.

"You can just give that to me!" Lou Baker said, but in the voice of a sensible, exasperated woman, faced, for the last time, by the small fry with the water gun. Then they heard her cross the room to the bathroom, slam the door.

"I'm going to make us all some fresh coffee," said Mrs. Pierce and poured out what was left in the pot, making quite a racket in the sink as she flushed the strainer. Foley and Dickie carried dishes to the sink, folded up the card tables, and leaned them against the wall. Lou Baker's record player, with what was left of the steamer labels and Bryn Mawr stickers, sat in the corner under a pile of old ten-inch discs. The label on the top record had all but worn off. Lou Baker had stuck on a piece of adhesive, a Band-Aid, which read, " 'Wang Wang Blues'—Paul Whiteman."



"I'll be goddamned," Foley said and picked it up, checked to see if it was cracked.

"Don't think I know that one," Dickie said. "How's it go?"

Foley raised the lid of the portable—if Lou Baker owned it, it was portable—and gave the crank four or five turns. Machine about the same vintage as the "Wang Wang Blues." Turntable had a power hum like a deep-freeze. He clawed an old needle out of a cup, screwed it into the head, lowered it to the record.

"Used to hear this—" he began, then had to stop, lift his voice a notch to be heard above the scratching. "Used to hear Whiteman play this when he was out at the Edge-water Beach."

"Sounds like that's where he is now," said Dickie. "That the breakers I hear on the pilings?"

Behind the hiss, the whir, and the rumble was the "Wang Wang Blues." As it should be, Foley thought. Record in about the same condition *they* were, scratched and cracked on the surface, hiss of the "Wang Wang Blues" running underneath.

"Knew the horn in that band," Proctor said, and there he was in the door, smiling at them. A curl of cigarette smoke disappeared up his unbuttoned sleeve.

"Was it Jordan?" said Foley.

"Tommy Gott," replied Proctor.

"He's got what it takes, all right," said Dickie and raised his coonskin hat, arched his back, and high-stepped across the room like Ted Lewis coming on the stage.

"We've certainly improved *some* things," said Mrs. Pierce, stepping into the room with the fresh pot of coffee. "Why, it makes you wonder how anybody ever listened to it."

"See if 'Stars Fell on Alabama' is there," Proctor said.

Foley turned to see, then swung around to face the hall door. Someone knocking. Pounding that is. They remained there, quiet, and the "Wang Wang Blues" scratched on.

From the bathroom Lou Baker called, "Will someone

please see who that is?"

"That's you, son," Dickie said and stepped aside to make way for Foley. Proctor also stepped aside, and Foley crossed the room to the door. The empty holster and belt were thrown out on the bed, and as Foley walked by he flipped the spread over on it. He took a firm grip on the doorknob, opened it. A small, round shouldered, doll-faced man wiped his face with his hanky, smiled, then said, "You people all right?" On the draught that stirred his hair came the far-away strains of "Wang Wang Blues."

"I'm awfully sorry we disturbed you," said Foley, "but we're giving Miss Baker a sort of little party. Bunch of her old friends. First time we're together in more than twenty years."

"Free to do as you please," he said, wagging his head, "but wife swore what she heard was an explosion. Thought I'd better step up and make sure everybody's all right."

"Well, there was an explosion," Foley said, smiling. "Chateau Lafite, twenty-seven. Great loss to us all."

"Oh, Christ!" he said. "Oh, Jesus! Now ain't that a fright!"

"Forgot and left it on the stove," Foley said. "Guess the heat was just too much for it. Regular damn cannon. Blew the cork right through the wall."

"Well, I'll be goddamned!" he said, and Foley could see that he half believed it. Something to tell his wife, tell the neighbours, tell his friends. Goddam boobs in the apartment upstairs left wine on their stove. "Well, have fun, kiddies!" he said, wiped the hanky around the back of his neck, and Foley watched him pad down to the floor below. In the room at the back. "Stars Fell on Alabama," with sharp, rhythmical clicks. Foley closed the front door, locked it, and on his way to the room at the back he saw Lou Baker, at the door to the bathroom, beckoning to him. She opened the door, took him by the sleeve, and drew him inside. She had wrapped a towel around her hair as if she had just washed it, and it gave her gaunt face a curiously medieval air.

"Peter," she said hoarsely, "you've got to."

"What now, Lou?"

"The gun—you've got to take the gun." She placed her hand on a folded bath towel, and he saw the gun was in it.

"I think that thing's empty now, Lou—" he began.

She cupped both hands to her face, pressing the fingers to her eyeballs, then she parted her hands, the eyes still closed. "I'm asking you to do this for *me*, Peter."

"All right," he said, "all right, Lou—but just what the hell am I going to do with it?" He pointed at the towel. "Slip it into my vest pocket, I suppose?"

"I don't care what you do with it," she said. "Just take it. When you go, take it. Drop it into the river. Into the gutter. I don't care."

"All right," he said, "okay, Lou." He could see the beads of sweat on her forehead, at the pores of her nose, and he wondered if she might be sick. Shock. She was just a little slow coming out of it. Not the same old Baker. Not in that respect.

"I'll see that it's in a bag," she said, and as she had pulled him in, she pushed him out, patting the sleeve of his coat absently. He stood there a moment, listening to a tune he did not know. Lee Jazz Hot. Someone strumming a guitar.

"Oh, Foley?" Proctor said.

"Coming," he said, and as he passed the closet slipped out his trench coat, taking it along. "Thought I had some cigars in one of these pockets, but I guess I don't."

But they were not listening. Mrs. Pierce was waiting for the music to begin. Her arms were slightly raised, like the wings of a chicken that was winded and was trying to cool off, but her eyes were lidded and she swayed back and forth to the clucking of her tongue. Moving in, but not close, Dickie placed an arm one-quarter around her, the hand riding on her corset, and over her shoulder leered at Foley, crying, "Look, pa! We're dancin'!"

"Foley," said Proctor soberly, "you remember this one?"

It was not so scratchy. It also had more volume, filling the room. He let it go on cleaning out the groove, till the

words began to form, then he said, "'Baby—baby, won't you please come home?' Beiderbecke," said Proctor solemnly.

Foley wagged his head, but he couldn't single the horn out of the noise. Not often. Just an accent here and there.

"What's it make you think of, old man?" Proctor said and raised his hands from his sides, where they had been hanging, as if the sleeves had suddenly filled with air. His knees bent slightly, he looked as though he might just float away. Finlike, and ever so lightly, his hands paddled the air.

"Good old Chi," Foley said, although that was not what it made him think of, but he knew that was what Proctor had in mind. *Good old Chi*. His hot, stinking room right near the park. The smell of food pouring out of the transoms, the cockroaches in the bathroom, and the strip-tease artist hammering her hairbrush on the glass. *I've been a heel for so long, old man, I'm going to make something out of it. I'm going to write the greatest book a shit-heel ever wrote.*

The music stopped, and Mrs. Pierce said, "But I can't say I find that so easy to dance to. Not any more!" she added and fanned her face with a potholder.

"Lady," said Proctor, and when Foley turned he saw the long-suffering mask slantwise on his face. "lady," he continued, recovering his role, "three white leopards, having eaten of my heart, my lungs, and my liver, have now turned to the hollow round of my skull."

"Where do you find the needles for this thing?" Dickie said.

Foley started to answer but saw that Mrs. Pierce was staring at something. Proctor also, at the door at his back, so he turned and saw Lou Baker—Montana Lou Garbo Baker—in her turtleneck sweater and her hair brushed back in a pompadour. Left Bank Baker, her bare feet in huaraches, her long legs in Proctor's pyjama bottoms, a cigarette in the holder that collapsed like a drinking cup.

"I thought I'd change," Lou Baker said when the effect

had been properly studied, "into something comfy," and slunk into the room.

"I swear," said Dickie, paused. "Well, I swear I made a mistake."

"Didn't we all, dear?" Lou Baker said, bending toward him like a willow for a light, then picked from her lips the tobacco crumbs that were not there. "Isn't somebody going to ask the old bag to dance?"

Foley stepped forward, slipped an arm around her, and felt the heat of the cigarette glowing on his neck.

"'Body and Soul' okay?" Proctor said, cranking the handle, and they stood waiting till the music started.

"Don't they make a nice couple?" Dickie said. "Chanel Five goes so nicely with Old Spice."

As they shuffled around, Lou Baker said, "Same old elevator dancer, no steps," and he felt the wetness of her hair soak through his shirt. It gave off an odour like a wet suntan. The smell of water when it dried on sun-scorched skin. He said nothing, he avoided the humming that usually indicated how much he liked dancing, because he knew that Lou Baker was in a state of mind. He held her up till the music stopped, and when she put up her face he kissed her.

"Well, who's next?" he said and turned to offer her to Proctor. He was in the corner, bent over the pile of records.

"He'll probably take his records and go home," said Dickie, "if he can't have the last one, the crybaby—"

"Any particular selection?" Proctor said.

"'Smoke,'" said Lou Baker, "'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes.'"

Dickie did a tit-tat-toe, then sang,

"'Let's begin and make a mess of both  
our bright  
young  
livesssss!'"

"'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes' is cracked," said Proctor and held it up. They saw it was cracked.

"They're all cracked," said Lou Baker. Foley glanced to see how she meant that, saw the familiar glazed expression,

Her lips were parted. The brightly painted false mouth made her face look green.

"What about 'Stormy Weather'?" Proctor said.

"Cracked!" said Lou Baker and snapped her fingers.

Dickie slipped his arm around her waist. "Music, kid! Let's have it!"

"All cracked," said Lou Baker. "Is no more music."

"Dance without it then," said Dickie, swung her around, and then seemed to lose his balance and almost fell. For a moment Foley thought he was drunk. He was about to say so—kid him a little, that is—when he saw the head of Lou Baker, lying on his shoulder, roll about loosely like that of a doll.

"The lady's passed out on me," Dickie said and held her like a rag doll, her feet just touching the floor, until they pushed up the only stuffed chair in the room and lowered her into it.

Foley sat on a cushion, his back to the doors through which a cool river draught was blowing, fanning the bloodless mask that appeared to be painted on Lou Baker's face. The bright carmine mouth had been wiped from her face by Mrs. Pierce, with a dishtowel. Proctor held the brandy to her lips.

"The excitement," Foley muttered, "along with the wine." He had said that many times, like talk about the weather.

"I can't say I blame her," Mrs. Pierce replied, and she had said that too many times, but now she added, "If I'd been in my own place I think I'd have fainted myself." Which was new. It meant the tension was wearing off. Foley was thinking how it seemed to take something—a flood, an earthquake, a dramatic fainting—to pull together what was forever falling apart. Lou Baker sighed, she moaned rather, and as they leaned forward to gaze at her face Foley felt her heel come down hard on his toe. She moaned again, her eyelids fluttered, and Mrs. Pierce said, "Accidents will happen, goodness knows," and daubed at Lou Baker's per-

spiring forehead.

"Professor Foley," said Proctor soberly, "what is an accident?"

"An accident?" said Foley, then lowered his eyes as Lou Baker brought her heel down, hard, on his instep. His eyes closed, he saw before him the headlines:

TENNIS STAR SURVIVES  
FREAK ACCIDENT

"Let me put it this way," Proctor said. "When I shot myself, was it accidental?"

"You mean—" replied Foley, then paused, sucked in his lip, and waited till the heel on his foot stopped rocking. "You mean," he continued, "was it God's will?"

Proctor did not smile. "I mean, was it a crime?"

"How in the world would anybody but God know that?" said Mrs. Pierce.

Proctor kept his gaze on Foley, who said, "I'm not up on just how God would handle it, but I know what Héloïse said to Abélard."

"What did she say?" Proctor said, and Foley noticed that Lou Baker's heel released its pressure. Did she wonder how Héloïse had handled it?

"Héloïse wrote to Abélard," Foley began, thinking how much he was like Proctor, " 'I have brought thee evil, thou knowest how innocently. Not the result of the act but the disposition of the doer makes the crime: justice does not consider what happens, but through what intent it happens. My intent toward thee thou only hast proved and alone can judge.' "

"You believe that?" Proctor said suddenly.

"It is the statement of a woman in love," said Foley.

"But who in the world can judge something like that?" Mrs. Pierce said.

"Your peers," said Dickie, "drawn by lot, providing they don't have a hair appointment."

"If you want to know the truth—" Proctor said, but

Foley did not. Not from Proctor. But when he opened his mouth it was merely to cover it with his hand. The pressure on his toe increased, his foot prickled with sleep. "The truth is," Proctor said, since no one had stopped him, "it was no accident. I did it. I shot myself."

Had Foley always known that? Had he been afraid of that truth himself? He kept his eyes off Dickie, wet his lips. "You didn't want to run the quarter?"

"I wanted to run it," Proctor said, his voice rising, "more than I wanted to live. That was why I did it."

"Mr. Proctor," Mrs. Pierce began, "I—"

Proctor smiled. He gazed at them, unseeing, as he had from the front of the morning paper.

"You wanted to show him you could take it?" Foley said, and saw Lawrence, Lawrence in the car lights, walking toward the smudgepot, fumbling at the fingers of one glove. But that was not it.

Still smiling, Proctor shook his head.

"No?" said Dickie.

"No," said Proctor. He looked Foley in the eyes and said, "Any Jew can take it. I wanted to show him a Jew who could give it up."

"Ohhhh!" Mrs. Pierce gasped, not at what she heard but at what she saw before her. Lou Baker, as if rising from the dead, slowly drew herself up. The wet towel dropped from her forehead, and she placed her free hand to her face. "You all right, honey?" Mrs. Pierce said and took the hand that Proctor was holding, patted it on the back, then rubbed it briskly between her own. Lou Baker seemed to be all right.

She sat there a moment, her eyes closed. Then she opened her eyes, said, "So the old bag couldn't take it?" She looked around at them sadly.

"You took more than anybody should be asked to," Mrs. Pierce replied.

"How long has it been?" Lou Baker said and turned her gaze on Proctor, who, with the tail of his shirt, was daubing the moisture around her eyes. Foley saw that her face



went forward to meet him, and held the pressure of his hand, like a stroked cat. "Was it long?" she asked him.

"It was long for me, baby," he said. That was why she had asked him, she saw it was true, and in her bloodless face there were patches of colour. Leaning back, she took his hand to steady herself, held on to it.

"What in the world time is it getting to be?" Mrs Pierce said.

Foley glanced at his watch, but it was Dickie who said, "Twenty past ten."

"I've just got to run then," Mrs. Pierce said, and Dickie replied, "I'll run you over to the station, Livingston-Fargo Ulcer Transit." He saluted, clicking his heels, but only Foley had his eyes on him. "Think Gallagher and Shean less popular today," Dickie said and buffed his nails on his sleeve.

"Think I'll ride along with you if you don't mind," Foley said. "Last train my way is about eleven too."

"I happen to know that it isn't," Lou Baker said.

"Later trains to Philly," Foley said, "but last local out of Philly is about twelve-forty. I'm not cruising in the suburbs on my salary."

"You could perfectly well put up here," said Lou Baker. "We've plenty of room, haven't we honey?"

"What's that, baby?" said Proctor. He hadn't been listening.

"I've got to get back and feed the cat," said Foley.

"That damn cat," said Lou Baker, who only liked kittens. "Is it the same damn cat as last time?"

"He'll be ten the sixth of next month," Foley said.

"Everybody else's cats die young," said Lou Baker, "the gods love them. But Foley's cats love Foley."

"They like regular habits," Foley said, getting up. "They're like me." He walked into the front room, where he found his coat lying out on the bed, a paper carton beside it. The carton was tied with a cord, and he could see that the gun lay in it crosswise. As he picked up his coat, the pair of haggard lovers—Kokoschka's storm-tossed

lovers, floating in their tempest—slipped from the inside pocket of the coat and dropped on the bed. Foley stooped for the postcard, then leaned forward and slipped it beneath one of the pillows. As he stood up, he heard Dickie say, "Want a hand with that coat?"

"Think I'll just carry it," Foley said and placed the carton inside the coat, folded over the tails. "Warm night," he added, "little warm myself."

"Let me perk up just a bit," Mrs. Pierce said and stepped into the bathroom, stood facing the mirror. She ran a comb through her hair, said, "In spite of everything, it's been the grandest party. Honey"—turning to Lou Baker—"I forgot my glasses." She rolled her lips back from her teeth. "Did I get any on them?"

"What lovely pearly teeth you have, grandmother," said Dickie.

"Isn't he a character?" Mrs. Pierce said, picked up her handbag, looked in it for something. She found a packet of mints, chlorophyll. "Anybody else like one?"

"Thank you," said Lou Baker.

"Don't thank her, thank Nature," said Dickie.

"I hear they make you glow like a watch," said Mrs. Pierce, "but I can't say that I believe it."

"Mesdames et Messieurs!" Dickie said, raising his hand for attention. He stepped forward and bowed to Lou Baker, took her hand in his own, kissed it. "Doll, it's been *real*."

"Oh, Christ!" said Lou Baker.

"That's the way they're doing it now," said Dickie.

"I can't believe it," said Lou Baker. "I *won't* believe it."

"You think we're different, eh?" Dickie said.

"I think we *were* different," Lou Baker replied. Under her gaze Dickie lowered his eyes, flicked the levers of his watch. "They say it's been real, but we *were* real," Lou Baker said.

Dickie whistled softly, paused, then sang, "Oh, he could dish it out, and she could take it—"

"They could *both* dish it out," Lou Baker said and turned and threw her arms around Proctor. Over her shoulder

Proctor gazed into the hall without smiling. His hand stroked her head.

"We'll be in touch," Dickie said, backed from the doorway, herded Mrs. Pierce down the hall to the landing.

"If Bryan had the faintest notion—" Mrs. Pierce began, and as they went down the stairs Foley saw the lovers, he saw their legs, that is, right where he had left them in the door. One of Lou Baker's mules dropped off the foot that rose from the floor.

"They make a nice pair of kids, don't them?" said Dickie and pushed out the glass side-wings of the windshield, so the draught down the river would not blow away their talk. There were yellow pier lights shining on the water, but the river looked cold.

"Is it *their* anniversary?" Mrs. Pierce asked and turned from Foley to Dickie.

"Their twenty-fifth," said Dickie, playing with the throttle.

"It's been hard on both of them," she said, "hasn't it?" Foley agreed, his head wagging, and she said, "You're married yourself, Mr. Foley?"

"No, I'm the withered appleseed." said Foley.

"You're so quiet," she said as if she hadn't heard that, "I would have sworn you were married."

"He's a very nice item," Dickie said, "if you're looking for something in drop-seat flannel."

They came off the bridge into City Hall square, swung around it to the right, then headed north on Broadway. Almost empty. A vacant Broadway bus coasted by. The wind in his face, the open car, made Foley think of the long night rides with Lawrence. They had been real, but it seemed a little crazy to think of it now. Time and the river, man's hunger in his youth, and the shadow of the ghost, the middle-ageing voyager, cruising down a street where the fires of the city were banked for the night.

"Is this the same street?" Mrs. Pierce said. "It wasn't like *this* when we drove over."

They crossed Eighth Street, curved past Wanamaker's, crossed Fourteenth with the changing lights, and Foley said, "You can let me off around Thirty-second, little walk do me good."

Did Dickie hear that? He did not reply. In the windshield Foley saw that his eyes reflected the lights. As they shifted from red to green, running up the dark street like a phosphorescent zipper, a perceptible change appeared in his face. He leaned forward on the wheel. The tyres increased their whine on the cobbles. Foley watched the floating needle drift up to fifty, hover there, drift past, as the row of green lights went up to where the night seemed to end. The smoking neon glow over Times Square and Forty-second Street.

"If you'll drop me off here," Foley said again, pulling in his head so Dickie would hear him, just as they flashed into the open on Thirty-fourth, then tunnelled again. The coon-skin hat squashed low on his head, the tail flying out behind him, Dickie was not in the car, not in New York, but in the current that passed from signal to signal, in the green lights that exploded, like a rocket, far up ahead.

Leaning toward him, Mrs. Pierce said, "I think Mr. Foley wants off," and she nudged him, but another light passed before he was able to bring the car to a stop.

"You say you want out, old man?" he said and let one tyre screech along the curbing. Foley groped for the handle of the door, let himself out. Mrs. Pierce gave him her hand, and he smiled at her friendly, motherly face.

"It's been a great pleasure, Mrs. Pierce," he said. "You were very kind to come to our crazy party."

"I don't really know when I've had so much fun," Mrs. Pierce said. Did she wink at him? Or was it merely a tic in that eye? Tired. Sort of think a little too much high-life brought on.

Dickie reached Foley a hand, said, "It's been simply realer than life, old boy," and the eyes under the coonskin cap were those of a Space Cadet.

"We'll keep in touch," Foley said, who had flunked a

student for talking such gibberish.

"Next time you come up," Dickie said, giving an urgent flick to the throttle, "you give me a blast, old man, and we'll have lunch."

Foley nodded, stood there with his right hand raised in the air. The car went off, leaped off, actually, leaving a dark film of rubber on the asphalt, and the arm that Mrs. Pierce had raised to wave clamped down on her hat. Up ahead, toward the captive future, the lights changed from red to green.

## THE CAPTIVITY: XII

After I left Proctor I walked back to the *pension* and went to bed. I didn't sleep, but I lay there till four, when the girls began to fool around with ping-pong, then I got up, shaved, and walked up Raspail to the American club. They were serving tea again, and the girls were dancing to American jazz. A few English boys were also dancing, if that was what you could call it, and the American boys were playing chess or reading Balzac. I walked up to Montparnasse, used the men's room in the Dôme, then took a table near the walk at the Coupole. I hadn't been there ten minutes when Montana Lou Baker strolled by. I let her go up one side, down the other, then I moved to a table where she couldn't help see me. She saw me and said, "Boy, is this seat taken?" and sat down on it. She had on the same dirty camel's-hair coat, but underneath she wore a cashmere sweater.

"Where are your chums?" I said, though it came out more like "thumbs," because my tongue was still sore.

"You have a very nice cedilla," she said. "You should go to Spain."

"I am thinking of Majorca," I said, "to get away from the States."

"They've gone to Laperouse," she said, indicating that sort of thing was beneath her. "She simply *adores* riz de veau Melba, and he said you should take me to Fouquet's."

"What do they serve at Fouquet's?" I said.

"Nothing you should eat before breakfast," she said and turned away from my café noir. I tried to think of something cutting, but her standards were too high. "We'll sit here for a while," she said, "then we'll take a walk till you feel better." She patted my hand, turned down her coat collar, and as she ran a comb through her hair I caught a

whiff of a scent she hadn't been wearing the night before.

We didn't go to Fouquet's, as it turned out, or anywhere else. When we took the walk that would make me feel better we went past Foyot's, near the Luxembourg, but it was full of famous people of the type she didn't like. We walked from there down to St. Germain, where we stopped to eat at the Deux Magots, and the garçon she liked complimented her again on being with me. They discussed me as if I weren't there. He stood by our table, his tray under his arm, and after they had finished discussing me they discussed anything that popped into his mind. Lou Baker had a nice nasal Delaware Group type of French. After the café noir we had brandy, which set her up but made me sleepy, and to wake me up we went for another walk. We went down the Boul' Mich' to the bridge, sat for a while on the Ile de la Cité, then went along the quai on the Right Bank, under the trees. When we stopped to rest she would lean her weight on me. There were people on the walk behind us, cars going back and forth over the bridges, but the thing about Paris was that we seemed to be alone.

After a while I said, "What did you do with yourself all day?"

"We went out to see Lawrence," she said.

"How is he?" I said.

"The cornada is very good," she said, "with a white rag, like a wick, in it, and he is very brown, like a Spaniard, and smoking Spanish cigars."

"The smoking is new," I said.

"He has a different model now," she said.

I didn't want to talk about that, so I said, "What did you do next?"

"Proctor kissed him, Pamela kissed him, then Dickie and Mrs. Crowley Senior kissed him, but I did not kiss him because I could not get near the bed." She paused. "You get the picture?"

"Very well."

"It will be even better," she said, "when you read the

book."

"He puts everything in it?"

"He puts in everything that happens." She waited, then said, "Now he's waiting for something to happen."

"Maybe he needs a new chapter?" I said.

"They both need a new chapter."

"Don't you worry about Lawrence," I said, "he'll turn something up."

"Lawrence watches Proctor, Proctor watches Lawrence, Lou Baker watches both Proctor and Lawrence, but nobody watches poor Dickie but Pamela." We sat there, and she said, "Everybody copies somebody—why the hell is that?"

I didn't know. I wondered who I was copying.

"I used to copy my older sister," she said, "my older sister copied Aunt Martha, who the hell Aunt Martha copied I just don't know." I didn't probe her, so she said, "We're all just a bunch of carbon copies."

"Not Lawrence," I said. "Lawrence is an original."

"Lawrence is worse than anybody," she said. "He's never been Charles Lawrence a minute of his life. He's always copied something, and right now he's copying Lawrence. He's waiting for Proctor to give him tips. He's so goddam good there isn't anybody left but Lawrence and God."

"Why do you hate him so much?" I said.

"Why does he make it so goddam hard? He isn't human. How can you copy something like that?" She leaned back to look at my face, then she took hold of my coat and tried to shake me.

To calm her down I said, "I'm not sure I agree with you, Lou."

She stopped trying to shake me and laughed. It was a very phoney laugh. She stopped and said, "Well, now isn't that darling. Well, now isn't that the greatest piece of goddam comfort. So he doesn't agree. Well, now isn't that just too sweet." I tried to get up, but she stood up and pushed me down. "You're so goddam calm," she said, "I could kill you!"

I don't know how I looked, but I wasn't calm.



She laughed her phoney laugh again. "But if I'm going to kill you I should do it here, and not back in the States. You know why? Say why."

"Why?"

"Because back in the States it would be crime, unless I was with child and you were his naughty dada, but over here, even without a child, it is a Moment of Truth!"

"Look, Lou—"

"In Spain there are bulls, in Paris there are girls, so you have your choice of a lovely cornada, which runs into money, or a nice touch of clap, which comes fairly cheap. In either case you have had your Moment of Truth. You can go back home, and if you are lucky you can have it again in a taxi, preferably horse-drawn, driving slowly through Central Park. That shows you have lived, and if you lived you can write a book. 'Querencia' is taken, so you'll have to call yours 'The Moment of Truth.'"

"Look—" I said.

"Do you hate me?"

"Why should I hate you, Lou?"

"Oh, my God!" She stood up, and when I reached for her ran off. I let her go, because her pumps were still in my lap. She got a pretty good start before she knew that, not being so calm and collected herself, then she just kept going since she was the kind of girl she was. I let her paddle along, her coat almost dragging now that she had no shoes, then I walked to the opposite corner and picked up a cab. I showed the cabby the shoes and said I thought I knew the little girl who had dropped them, and what I wanted to do was just follow her along. He seemed to find that understandable. A girl who dropped her shoes along the quai was not something strange to him. So I got in the back, where I found a few hairpins, just as Lou Baker had predicted, and we went along the quai to the Pont des Arts, where we picked her up. I mean, where we drew up on a level with her. In her finest nasal Delaware Group French, she told the cabby she was out for an airing, which was something she was accustomed to taking in her bare feet. If the

gentleman tourist wanted her shoes he was welcome to them. She would toss in her panties if he would go away and leave her alone.

That was how it was at the Pont des Arts, but passing the Tuileries she rested for a moment—we all did, that is—then we headed up the Champs Elysées. A tall girl, she had the usual flat pair of feet. When it was perfectly clear she wouldn't make it she tried to flag a cab herself, but there weren't many running at that time of night. If they were, they seemed to understand that sort of thing. Near the Rond Point she tried to duck into the woods behind the Palais de Glace, but in that coat I soon headed her off. She pulled my hair and pounded on my chest, knowing that I was calm and collected, then she let me carry her back to the cab, where she sat in my lap. The cabby drove around for another hour or more. Then he drove out to the avenue Hoche, where he let us sit, charging me nothing, under the trees across the street from her *pension*. Later he brought me back through the Trocadéro, looking very fine at that time in the morning, and across the river between the spread legs of the Eiffel Tower. A mist hung over the trees but the morning sky was clear. As it was getting on toward four in the morning, and since I still had the key to Dickie's apartment, I let him drive me down to Lawrence's place on the rue Bonaparte. He charged me only twenty francs coming back, and when I tipped him another ten he said after such a fine night I should have a good sleep.

I didn't, however. I don't think I slept at all. The scent she had been wearing was in my hair, when I rolled over it was on the pillow, and I lay wondering if I had the nerve to fight bulls or not. To be gored, to have a lovely cornada with a white rag in it, like a wick, and then to go back and get myself gored again. It didn't seem likely. The bull would know this right off the bat. If I was the rubber stamp of some Viking, one who was extremely calm and collected, not even love would make a good bullfighter out of me. I would have to be admired for being a different rubber 'stamp.

Dickie didn't show up at all, and in the morning when the phone rang, I let it ring for a while, before I got up to answer it. I thought it might be Lou Baker, and it was.

"Lou?" I said, recognizing her voice, but she didn't seem to recognize mine.

"You're awfully goddam clever," she said, "you must feel awfully proud."

"This is Foley, Lou," I said.

"Oh, my God! Where's Dickie?"

"He isn't here right now."

"Oh, God! He's probably out passing them around."

"Passing what around, Lou?"

"The book. The poor boob's book."

"You mean *his* book is out?" I said.

"It's out," she said, "but he'll never know it. Dickie brought it out without his name."

"You mean—?" I said.

"There's nothing on it but *Querencia*," she said.

"His name isn't on it *anywhere*?" I said, but she had hung up, or was cut off, and I put the receiver back on the phone.

The blinds were drawn at the windows, but the morning light filtered into the room. Around the walls were the swords used by bullfighters, a cape spread wide to show the bright red lining, and several shafts, like short javelins, framing a blown-up photograph of a bullfight. The bullfighter was standing with his back to the camera, stiffly erect, his feet close together, while the blurred hulk of the bull, the curved horn tip showing, charged up through the cape. The man held the cape as if the bull were going by on tracks, like a train. The cape was like a mail sack made to catch the hooks as the train went past. I could see the pigtail down the bullfighter's back, and in the charge of the bull the cape billowed out like a flag attached to a post.

I had never seen a bullfight, but I had seen Lawrence, as blurred in action as this charging bull, go up towards the ball the way the curving horn went up through the cape. The game was not so different—the way Lawrence played

it—as one might have thought. The cornada was the bull's ace, the stroke that had no comeback. But if he charged and missed, he had no comeback himself. A serious game. The sort of game Lawrence liked to play.

I may have stood there five or ten minutes—anyhow, I was still there, right beside the phone, when it rang again. For what seemed a long time I let it ring. I wasn't playing the game, any game, and I didn't have to answer the phone. But it seemed as if that bull would hang in the air and the red-lined cape billow out forever, so I picked up the receiver, said "Hello?"

For five or ten seconds I thought nobody was there. Then I heard her inhale, gasp nearly, as if she had been holding her breath, and she said, "He's dead. He's dead, Peter." Then she hung up.

## FOLEY: 12

In the men's room at Penn Station, Foley took the pistol from the Gimbel's carton, found a piece of paper clipped to the barrel with a rubber band. On it Lou Baker had scrawled:

*See you at the next hearing.*  
*Foley's Chick*

He slipped the gun into the sleeve of his trench coat, rolled it up carefully. The coat under his arm, he boarded the train, walked through the crowded coaches to the smoker, found a seat on the aisle opposite the water cooler. The GI near the window had a bump on his forehead, a freshly bandaged eye.

"This seat taken?" Foley said and, getting no answer, turned to the sailor behind him.

"He's back in the bar," the sailor replied, "but he's tight as a mule's ass. You might as well take it."

"Think I'll step back for a drink myself," Foley said. He hesitated with the folded coat in his hands, then placed it on the seat to hold it. "Mind keeping an eye on the coat?" he added.

"For a small commiseration," the boy replied, but without removing the gob's hat from his eyes. The coach was full of sailors, soldiers, and a cloud of eye-smarting cigarette smoke. As the train began to move Foley walked down the aisle, feeling the tunnel pressure build up in his ears, and in the third coach back he stepped from the aisle to let a soldier pass. He came weaving down the aisle with his GI cap full of ice cubes.

"Scoose me," he said as he passed Foley and smiled to show the boy behind the cloud of gin. He was dark, a blue

beard along his jaw, but the coach lights gave him an ashen pallor, as if a barber had freshly talcumed his face. From a candy-striped cord, tied in a bow behind his neck, dangled a little boy's toy bugle. In the clip for the music, a horizontal Petty girl. "'Scoose me,'" he repeated, rocking with the train, and Foley placed a hand on his shoulder to support him. The curve held them together, and the reflection Foley saw in the streaked coach window was that of a father, an affectionate hand on the shoulder of his son. "Thanks, pop," the boy said, and as the train left the tunnel he lurched away.

Foley kept going, through one coach, then another, till he reached the bar. He found it nearly empty. A woman reading *Life*. Two sailors asleep. He ordered bourbon, leaning from his chair to point behind the bar at a particular bottle, one of the miniature whisky bottles that he didn't have. He tried a new one every trip. He kept them on the bookshelf with his Loeb Classics. They indicated that Foley took his culture, like his Greek, straight and on the rocks.

His head in the car door the conductor called, Newark. Newark, next stop North Philadelphia, reminding Foley of a clever passage from his own works. *Junction City, Kansas City, New York City, Sui City*—Foley muttered, but not smiling, not so pleased with himself as he had once been. Who would be next? The steady erosion of the liberal mind. Winant, Matthiessen, Forrestal, and—Foley paused, swallowed the name that next rose to his lips. But not Foley. Lou Baker would say he lacked the guts. Foley would reply no, he had the guts but he lacked the conviction, the habit of perfection, that would lead him to believe that even *that* settled anything. For one thing, he didn't want to leave something someone else would have to clean up. Except the general mess. Except the world in a hell of a mess.

He also lacked the temperament for despair—or the passion, as Lou Baker would describe it, who liked to say that no man had ever killed himself with thought. Foley had replied no, that Lawrence had done precisely that,

being as good as dead once he had made the decision. The actual shooting little more than an afterthought. A testament to the effect that the decision had taken place. Pity had led Proctor, pity and imperfection, to put an end to the great quarter-miler, but it was perfection, the terror of it, that had killed Lawrence. The knowledge that he might be caught with perfection on his hands and still be discontent.

Foley thought too much, as Lou Baker had pointed out, ever to get around to anything like action, but there had been a night—two or three nights after the bombing of Cassino—when the complex problems of his own inaction were simplified. Was it worth going on, was it worth the suffering—or was it not? Was it true that life, as he liked to put it, *ne vaut pas la peine d'être vécu*? He always put it in French. It made it seem more impersonal. It was hardly his own life that he meant, when he phrased it like that. Like Hans Castorp, that shy lover who made his true love in a foreign language, Foley found it easier, in that language, to make his peace. To face his Maker in a more musical, impersonal tongue.

*Juger que la vie vaut ou ne vaut pas la peine d'être vécu.*

There had been the night when he had come to the decision that life was not worth the pain of being lived. If he had been a man of the calibre of Lawrence he would have died on the spot. But he was merely Peter Foley, and he did not die of thought.

He had gone to bed early—an old and cagey manoeuvre to escape from the world and Peter Foley—but he had not slept, and lay there trapped with this Foley in the dark. They had made this little dialogue of Good and Evil—Diogenes Foley with his magic lantern—and he had proved to himself that Evil was a sad miscarriage of the Good. No more. That it lacked a soul it could call its own. It rooted in the ground where the Good lay bleeding, brought low

by environment or some political cunning, but the Good would not die because only the Good could not be explained. It came without motives, like sunlight, and suffered or did not suffer evil, but Evil was simply inconceivable without Good. Evil marked the spot where some good had fallen, like the X in the photographs in newspapers, and it owed what life it had to this tragic circumstance. That was how he argued. Insofar as he believed, that was what he believed. It seemed to make sense, it had about it what a Greek might have respected, but it did not have, as Proctor once said, what it takes. What did it take? It took something that would explain what had happened to Peter Nielson Foley the day he had spent in the induction centre and come out 4 F.

It seemed a small thing, in the abstract, to make him so upset. He had walked into the induction centre with a typewritten statement of seven pages, which they would read, stand amazed, and then lead him off to wherever they tortured pacifists. Mimeographed sheets of this statement had been sent to friends, submitted to and read by the college authorities, and it was well known that Professor Peter Foley stood where he stood. Where that was the statement pointed out. It had taken him several months to write, leaned somewhat heavily on Thoreau and Tolstoi, and appeared to represent the philosophical turn of Foley's life. A stand. He had stepped forward and taken it. He had packed up his books, found a home for the cat, bought the plain workman's clothes he would wear in prison, and in a suit of this type he had made his appearance at the induction centre.

It might have been different if he had found the man in charge. He did not. Nobody seemed to know who he was. In the meantime he was asked to strip, and with the statement in one hand, his clothes in the other, he joined the line of nude, summer-hot, and smelling men. In the next ten hours nobody asked him about the papers he was holding, and he returned them, unread, to the pocket of his new coat. Into those seven pages he had put his *cœur mis*



*à nu*. It had seemed a fine thing, in his study, it had been warmly applauded by his friends, but in an empty loft with several hundred nude men it was not the same. *Le corps mis à nu* was something else again.

The experience found Foley unprepared. He had lived in the world, he thought, for a good many years. He had seen hundreds of assorted males in the nude. But he had not seen several hundred piled together, their pitiful drapery over one arm, herded like whores from one checkup to another one. He found it hard to conceive, when he thought of it at all, that the campus he had left really existed, or that a man named Foley had typed out a statement he took seriously. There was no connection, none at all, between the seven typewritten pages in his hand and the nightmare world in which he passed the day. He had failed the army, but he had passed, with flying colours, through the gates of hell.

Through the windows that opened over the street, and through which they were observed until the novelty passed, the commonplace noises of the everyday world blew in and out. The state of the world, the ballgame at Shibe Park, organ music for eating, band music for dancing, string music for relaxing, soft music for listening, with the background music of the pianola in the penny arcade. Life went on. Nothing seemed to have stopped. Wolf calls, police calls, fire calls, commercials, the crack of the rifles in the shooting gallery, the click of the balls, the ringing of the bells in the pinball machines. Trains came up from Washington, down from New York, the legs and hips were added to a girl on a signboard, and a giant in red pants, advertising bone meal, tossed packages of flower seed through the windows. A helicopter made a landing on the station roof to speed the mail. A pedlar sold rubber monkeys, copulating, but hearing-speaking-seeing no Evil, and plastic walnuts for the shell game to swarthy sailors from the Argentine. Business as usual, as aimless and as pointed, and what had seemed so depressing to Foley in the morning, the shapeless extravagant waste of living, looked

almost beautiful to him in the afternoon. Were they free, these people, to do as they liked? To eat foot-length hot-dogs, hoot at the girls, crank the handles of machines with caged fan dancers, or make love in the seats of cars at the back of parking lots? Unaware, or if aware not caring, that men like themselves, brothers and keepers, were parading like moulting storks in the loft of a building where the signs fined you for *Spitting* and men stood in line holding pint milk bottles of warm, cloudy piss.

A commonplace day, like all others, the sun rose and set, like the others, but not on the one in the limbo of Foley's mind. That day had the durable, changeless pattern of Dante's hell. The same faces appeared, the same scabrous bodies, and the same hoarse croaking of voices. All there but the Leader. In place of the Leader was the line. It went out through the door ahead, came in through the one behind.

At Foley's rear was a Mr. Folger, Andrew Folger, a farmer, who had got up at dawn and driven in with baskets of sweet corn. The corn could be seen on the truck in the parking lot. One of the tyres was low, and Mr. Folger often referred to it. A middle-aged man. His hands and face, including the dark patch at his throat, seemed to have come along with his body through some mistake. They were brown and weathered, while his body was pink and white. A nest of auburn hair lay on his chest, dangled a vinelike streamer on the curve of his belly, then ended abruptly where the friction of his belt had worn it off. He stood with his arms folded on his chest. This concealed the brown hands in his armpits, but there was no place to hide his head, or his face, clapped on the white shoulders like a carnival mask. Spots were found in one lung, sugar in his urine, and cavities in his teeth. On the parking lot his tyre went down and the sweet corn dried in the sun.

At Foley's front was Mr. Fogarsi, or Fugarcy, or Focharsi, since it was spelled two ways on his papers and he wasn't quite sure himself. A Latin lover, with blue-black hair and a fawn-coloured sports coat with built-in shoulders, Mr.

Focharsi wore charms on his ankle, at his wrist, and around his throat. A woman's hair was braided through them all, and they would not slip off. Mr. Focharsi had teeth like ivory but was not able to remove his socks. They had become, over the months and years, part of his feet. Athlete's foot had made them a living part of himself. When this was clear, and when his feet had been dipped in a solution to reduce the odor, he was permitted to put on his patent leather shoes and wear them around. They had loose cleats, for tap dancing, at the heel and toe. Mr. Focharsi could dance, which he did for a living, putting down "dance man" as his vocation, but in the setting-up exercises it was found he could not bend at the knee. When the intern cried "Down," and they all went down, Mr. Focharsi stayed up. On his face was the expression of a man whose heart had stopped. It was thought that the meaning of the word was not clear to him. Other words were tried, several of them suggested by Peter Foley, the learned Professor, but Mr. Focharsi's knees did not understand one of them. When the call came his head went down but his knees stayed up. He was taken from the line for further experiments.

Foley could bend at the knee, his lungs showed no spots, he read the lines off the cards and heard the ticking watch, but his pump, as the intern described it, was not so good. It clopped. When he did the bends it clopped and leaked. It was not a piece of plumbing the army wanted on its hands.

Foley received this news around eight o'clock, a little more than ten hours after he had entered, statement in hand, the door he was now free to go out. He felt nothing. Nothing that he thought he should feel. The shock had worn off, but he did not even feel relief. *Nothing*. So he had come to know, in spite of himself, what hell was really like.

He put back on the clothes he had carried all day, pulled the clean socks over his dirty feet, waved to Mr. Focharsi, and went down the stairs to the street. The everyday street,

full of the commonplace, everyday scene. The neon signs flickered, the traffic was noisy, the sailors in the penny arcade gulped hotdogs with the gaze of men one hour from the battlefield. A commonplace scene, as American—as the book jackets said—as a filling station, but Foley found it stranger than the nightmare he had left at the top of the stairs. More unreal. Harder to account for, that is. Given man for what he was, his *corps mis à nu*, how had he ever put together anything that worked, or woven socks that would slip on and off a man's feet? Where did he get the lips that would smile, and the legs that would bend at the knee? Mr. Focharsi put the question. His knees put it, that is. Faced with the baffling commands of life, they refused to bend. They held fast. Mr. Focharsi seemed to be willing, but his limbs were not. Froglike, he was caught midway between a hopper and a man.

Foley had walked the eight or ten miles back to his room: he had taken the long way, following the river, crossing and recrossing all the bridges, as if a leap into the river was what he had in mind. He did. He thought about it. But the thought passed. It seemed to be as pointless as the other thoughts he had.

Long after dark, after midnight, he had reached the sleeping college campus, where he sat on the wall along the road and took off his socks and shoes. The socks in his pocket, carrying his shoes, he had wandered barefoot around the moonlit campus, sitting for a while in the empty seats of the football field. Along towards morning he had gone to his room, but not to sleep. He lay out on the bed listening to the clapping hammer of his leaky pump. He had often suspected the worst, and now he knew. One day, like Mr. Focharsi's knees, he would bend no more.

In this state of mind, or absence of mind, he turned to a thick book he had been reading—had bought, in fact, to read at his leisure while in jail. He opened the book—toward the end, for he thought he might not live long enough to read it—and found himself scanning, with pro-

fessional detachment, several lines of verse.

There flies a grey bird, a falcon  
From Jerusalem the Holy  
And in his beak he bears a swallow . . .

Something about these lines, the grey bird, the falcon, and the day he had just passed at the induction centre, gave him the feeling he had stumbled on some strange revelation, some gift of prophecy. So he had read on, some thirty lines of it, which turned out to be a poem, a Serbian poem, dealing with the Tsar Lazar and his defeat at Kossovo by the Turks. Of this Tsar Lazar, Foley had known nothing, nothing at all until that moment, but this grey bird, this falcon, seemed to fly like a portent through his own life. This Tsar Lazar, whose destination was heaven, was asked to choose between the heavenly or the earthly kingdom, and of course he had chosen the heavenly. The price of this kingdom, this eternal victory, was that he and his army of seventy thousand men would be slaughtered by the Turks on the field of Kossovo. This had occurred, and the poem closed:

All was Holy, all was Honourable.  
And the Goodness of God was fulfilled.

These words should have quieted Foley's troubled heart, but the clapping increased. He gulped for air: despair seemed to smother him like a hood. What did he feel? When he was able to feel, he felt sold out. Sold down the river with the Tsar Lazar and his army of seventy thousand. Down the river with Saint Lawrence, the self-slaughtered matador, down the river with Brother Proctor, the self-styled martyr, and down the river with Sister Baker, who kept the chronicle straight, like the Venerable Bede. Last but not least to be sold down the river was Foley himself. Crouched on the battlefield, as if in hiding, or about to leap into the arms of God, but, like Mr. Focharsl, unable

to bend or flex his knees. A true symbol of the froglike passage he had made through the earthly life.

Did they lack conviction? No, they had conviction. What they lacked was intention. They could shoot off guns, at themselves, leap from upper-floor windows, by themselves, or take sleeping pills to quiet the bloody cries of the interior. But they would not carry this war to the enemy. That led to action, action to evil, blood on the escutcheon of lily-white Goodness, and to the temporal kingdom rather than the eternal heavenly one. That led, in short, where they had no intention of ending up. The world of men here below. The god-awful mess men had made of it.

In this peaceful manner the Prince of Darkness ruled everywhere. The bloody plain of Kossovo was as wide as the world. Everywhere that men of good will could be found they stood in queues of happy victims, waiting to spill their pure blood on the field of Kossovo. Black lamb and grey falcon, a gut-deep urge that in surrender was the moral victory, in death and defeat the lasting procession of the lasting world. But this one, this bloody cockpit, this temporal kingdom and battleground, could be left, must be left, that is, to shift for itself. The Proctor-Foley salvage operations applied to vermin, not to men.

Foley suddenly remembered, with shame, the pious meetings of the pacifists he had attended, where it was known that the doing of good, or of evil, was a devil's snare. The doing of anything led to action, all action was blended with evil, but one could be good, one could only be good, by sitting on one's hands. Otherwise they would get bloodied in an earthly, temporal fight of some sort. Settling nothing. For what was ever settled here on earth?

A cold draught blew on his neck, and Foley turned to see a young GI, carrying a trench coat, push through the door and weave down the aisle to where he sat. His uniform was soiled, where he had just been sick, and there were drops of water on the tin horn of his bugle. One side of his

face was still colourless and bruised with sleep.

"This yours?" he said to Foley and held the trench coat out over the aisle.

"Why, yes," Foley replied, "thank you very much," and the young man tossed the coat over the back of a chair. A fold in the skin cut across the bruised side of his face like a scar.

"Like a drink?" Foley said to be friendly, and the young man closed his eyes as if to think.

He thought, then said, "I'm gettin' off here," but he did not leave. "I'm gettin' off here," he repeated, then furtively, as if his fly were open, he spread wide the flaps of his top-coat and groped for the handle of the pistol he had thrust, like a pirate, between his pants and his belt. Before handing the gun to Foley he sniffed the barrel.

"Ahhhhhh," he said, as if it gave off an incense, then placed it carefully on the table.

"An heirloom," Foley said casually. "In the family for years. I'm very much obliged."

The young man belched, bowed with a sober, military air, and started away before what Foley had said penetrated his mind. He stopped, centred in the aisle, and began to smile. A secret smile, from the way he blushed, but one that Foley knew very well. An old smile, the shameless smile of Proctor smelling bullshit. The young man did not speak; he stood remote and erect, as if digesting the smile with pleasure, then he lurched off as if hidden gears had suddenly meshed. It was clear that he hoped to reach the door before he laughed. He managed, thanks to the conductor who had propped the door open, then it slammed behind them as the train braked to a stop.

A moment later Foley saw him on the train platform, seated on his duffle bag. He held the bugle clasped in his hand, and as the train began to move he spotted Foley at the window, wildly waved the bugle, then held it to his lips. There was no sound, but a flaming paper streamer with wagging fingers at the end leaped towards Foley, struck the glass, and thumbed a red-paper nose. Then it re-

turned, with a snap, into the mouth of the horn. The young man threw up his arms, rocked over backwards, as if the recoil had been too much for him, and as the train pulled out Foley saw his polished boots waving in the air.

That was all, but at the back of Foley's mind, glowing like a lantern slide, he saw another bugler. One that wore, in the fog-strewn evening, a canary-yellow slicker, a nautical hat, and the air of a man riding to the hounds, while he solemnly chanted :

"Strawberry shortcake  
Huckleberry pie  
Girls go to Oxy  
I wonder why."

At the moment of crisis, as the signals floated up from the huddle at the goal line, the young man took the horn from his slicker, stood up, and sounded a blast. No bugler, the sound that he made was not of this world. More like a shriek, a loon's cry in the darkness, so that players, umpires, and spectators wheeled to see what comet, unknown and unpredicted, crossed the night sky. As one had. Perhaps, as one always would. Cruising around in the dark, in the void, just for the hell of it.

Foley slipped on his coat and walked through the car to the rear platform. They were cossing the Schuylkill. On the water he could see the band of coach lights. Down the river the flicker of car lights on the bridges, the neon glow over the city and the moon, lit up from below, as if part of it. A signboard that had been turned off for the night. No longer a goddess, not much of a wonder, more of a tide-making mechanical marvel—and yet it was still, like Foley himself, part of the night. Destination unknown, resolution uncertain, purpose unclear, source undetermined, but a slit in the darkness where the eye of the chipmunk might peer out. A crack in the armour where the bugler sounded a wild, carefree note. An island in space



where young men were still careless with themselves. Casually, as if flipping a coin, Foley tossed the heirloom over the railing, but he did not hear it splash or see white water where it fell. The rails clicked, the train left the trestle, and as they pulled into the Philadelphia station the conductor stepped out and reminded him that this was his stop.

He went along with the ten or twelve people who got off. He used the escalator, followed them up the ramp, and found the last train waiting on the local platform. In the smoker he took out and lit up an unfinished cigar.

At his station—within the station (the insects were getting to be a nuisance)—he saw the tramp he had passed in the morning stretched out on a bench. He lay facing the wall, his head resting on the bundle tied up with the rope.

Lights burned in the dorms, and as he circled the pond he heard birds stir on the water, rise flapping, and drip water on his face as they passed overhead. In the window where, early that morning, he had seen Mrs. Schurz in a cloud of grey flannel, a lamp now burned, lighting up the tiles on the porch roof. That would be, he knew from experience, something about the cat. Mrs. Schurz did not wait up unless there had been trouble in Paradise. Unless God's half acre, by cat or man, had been disturbed. He went around to the back, hoping to miss her, but as he turned the key in the lock the window directly over his head went up.

"Oh, Mr. Foley?"

"It's me, Mrs. Schurz," he replied.

"A man was here to see you," she said. That was all.

"A man?" he asked.

"He wouldn't tell me his name or a thing, Mr. Foley. He just said he had to see you personally."

"I see," he replied, opened the door, stepped out again as Mrs. Schurz called, "Mr. Foley, I want you to know that I don't give snoopers any satisfaction. If he got any, I want you to know it wasn't from me."

"I appreciate that," he said. "Thank you very much."

"It was none of my business, and I told him I didn't think it was his."

"Thank you kindly," Foley replied, closed the door, set the lock, paused in the dark hallway leading back to his room. Mrs. Schurz lowered her window, water dripped on a saucer left in the sink. Drop, drop, drop, *I am eroding*, the witness had said. Leaving bedrock. A white scar across the mind indicating where the anchor might have dragged. A broken link in the chain where a man had been torn from his captive past.

He heard Mrs. Schurz sag into her bed, then he walked down the hallway to his study. The smell of the orange he had peeled in bed was strong in the room. A sprinkling of moonlight and soot lay on the yellow pages in the fireplace. He struck a match on the hearth, took from the pile of yellow pages the sheet lying on top, the last page of the book, and saw that the morning splatter of bird dung had dried. He left it. Proof positive that there, at that point, the book had stopped.

The match that he held burned down to his fingers, blackening the nail. He cupped the flame to his face, as if he might see, within it, a moment of truth. A draught down the chimney brightened the flame, sprinkled more soot on the yellow pages, and the reflection that he saw in the study window smoked like a flare. Cupped in his hands was not the dying match but a smoking smudgepot. Into the flame Lawrence dipped his hand, and with the sightless smile of an antique statue he turned and gazed into Foley's face. The lips silent, the gaze already remote, he peered toward Foley from a sacred wood that slowly receded into the changeless past. A blurred, shadowy figure, caught by the camera, nameless in a scene that seemed immortal, like that woman of mystery in the postcard view of the Seine. Suspended in time, like the ball that forever awaited the blow from the racket, or the upraised foot that would never reach the kerb. A permanent scene, made up of frail impermanent things. A lover like Lou Baker, a saint like Lawrence, a martyr like Proctor, and a witness like Foley.

So much fire and water, so much fear and wonder, so much smoke and sprinkling of soot. But in the burning they gave off something less perishable. How explain that Lawrence, in whom the sun rose, and Proctor, in whom it set, were now alive in Foley, a man scarcely alive himself. Peter Foley, with no powers to speak of, had picked up the charge that such powers gave off—living in the field of the magnet, he had been magnetized. Impermanent himself, he had picked up this permanent thing. He was hot, he was radioactive, and the bones of Peter Foley would go on chirping in a time that had stopped. No man had given a name to this magnet, nor explained these imperishable lines of force, but they were there, captive in Peter Foley—once a captive himself.

With his blackened fingers he struck another match on the bricks. He read again the last scene, the death of Lawrence, the hollow voice of Lou Baker over the phone; then he sat in the dark until her voice seemed to blend with the stirring birds. The cat clawed at the screen, and he walked through the house to the kitchen door. A new day was breaking, the dawn like a sheet of clear ice on the pond. He took out his watch, started to wind it, and saw that the time—the captive time—had stopped. At two o'clock in the morning, the first day of his escape from captivity.